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THE LIFE OF
MICHAEL KELLY

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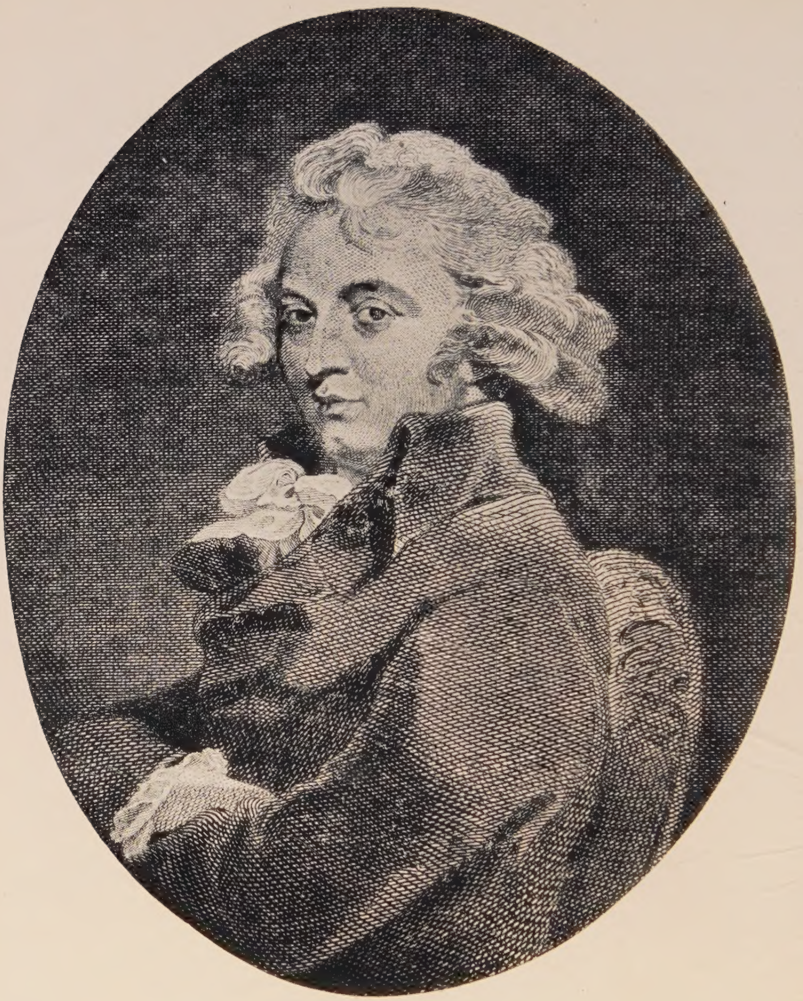

MICHAEL KELLY

About the age of twenty-eight, from a print, after the portrait by Lawrence, in the collection of Mr. Richard Northcott, Archivist of the Royal Opera, Covent Garden

THE LIFE OF
MICHAEL KELLY
MUSICIAN, ACTOR, AND BON VIVEUR
1762—1826

By
S. M. ELLIS

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PREFACE

When Sir Walter Scott reviewed the *Reminiscences* of Michael Kelly at full length in *The Quarterly Review* of June, 1826, he rightly laid stress on the gaiety of the autobiographer, his bright and happy nature, which enabled him to recall the joys of a most eventful life unsoured by its inevitable sorrows and pain—though he had more than his fair share of the latter. As Scott said, Kelly was a man who had " spent all his life among the lovers of laugh and fun, choice spirits, whom Time cannot exhaust, and who make good the boast of Anacreon, and are merry in spite of misfortune and grey hairs. . . . We have a special relish for the soufflé of Seignior Kelly. . . . His Memoirs often put us in mind of Gil Blas. . . . He has seen the world on both sides, and has told the result of his observation with a good deal of light humour."

A wonderful retrospect indeed Kelly had to look back upon ere his life closed. An Irish boy of unquenchable merriment, he went, as a musical prodigy, to Italy—the old-world Italy of the eighteenth century, with all its colour and romance. The protégé of Sir William Hamilton, every door was open to him from those of the palaces downwards. Kings, Queens, and an Emperor were ever kind to him. He touched the robes of history, for he saw Prince Charles Edward Stuart, saw Louis XVI and Marie Antoinette brought back as prisoners from Varennes, saw Napoleon at the apex of his power and arrogance; he knew Nelson and Lady Hamilton. In Vienna, as a star of the Imperial Opera, he was the favoured friend of Mozart, Haydn, and Gluck. In London he was the congenial intimate of Sheridan and the wits of the circle of the Prince Regent; he was the friend and fellow-player of Mrs. Siddons, Kemble, Mrs. Jordan, and scores of others whose names are writ clear in the Roll of Thespis.

No excuse, therefore, is needed for presenting to a new generation the story of such a picturesque and colourful life. *The Reminiscences of Michael Kelly* were published in 1826, a few months before he died, and have never been reprinted. The work was prepared for the press by Theodore Hook, who, according to the memoir of that author, prefixed to his *Choice Humorous Works*, " from motives of pure kindness re-wrote, that is to say, composed from rough illiterate materials, the very entertaining Reminiscences of an old theatrical and musical friend of his—Michael Kelly. The book was received with astonishment, for he generously kept his own secret."

In view of the chronic financial straits of Hook, there is no reason to believe that he did the work for " pure kindness " alone, and if he kept the secret of his share of the authorship, most certainly Kelly did not. Michael Kelly was extremely displeased with the way Hook dealt with his material, for he said to Cyrus Redding, " the infernal bookseller (Colburn) employed Hook to arrange the Memoirs for publication, but that rascal Hook omitted things he had no right to leave out."[1] Further, Hook perpetrated many errors, and indulged in some curious freaks of spelling, such as " scite " for site and " burth " for birth.

My object in telling the story of Michael Kelly's intensely interesting career is to make his record the basis of a survey of the theatrical life of his period, aided by many other sources of information and full annotation. Thus I hope to present the players both before the Green Curtain, in their hours of histrionic and operatic triumph, and behind it, in the joys and sorrows of their private lives. It will be seen that, though they were " rogues and vagabonds " in the eyes of the law, they were also the intimate friends of the greatest both of intellect and of social position. The actresses, it is true, often shared the illicit couches of princes : but this is a chronicle of human nature and not of Utopian ideals.

In a subsequent volume I hope to bring this survey as far as the middle of the nineteenth century by recounting the story of Michael Kelly's niece, Fanny Kelly, and her circle—the actress to whom Charles Lamb proposed marriage, and whose papers are in my possession.

In connection with this present volume, I wish to thank Lord Barnard for permitting me to examine the manuscript diary (preserved at Raby Castle) of the Duke of Cleveland, who was acquainted with Michael Kelly at Vienna in 1786–87 ;

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[1] See later, pp. 335-6.

Mr. Campbell Dodgson, of the British Museum, and Mr. B. S. Long, of the Victoria and Albert Museum, for assistance in the selection of illustrations; Mr. A. Hughes-Hughes, for elucidating some points concerning Mozart; and Mr. Richard Northcott, the archivist of the Royal Opera, Covent Garden, for the loan of a portrait reproduced in this work.

S. M. Ellis.

April, 1930.
8, Kent Road,
Kew Gardens.

MICHAEL KELLY

Proem

On one occasion, at Cheltenham, when Michael Kelly met the eccentric Lord Howth, he happened to mention that he was suffering from a bad sore throat. His noble friend replied that he could give him a never-failing remedy for that ill, the recipe being, on going to bed, to get scalding water, the finest double-refined sugar, two juicy lemons, and some good old Jamaica rum ; mix the ingredients together, and, when in bed, take a large jorum of the beverage. "Why, my lord," Kelly observed, "your prescription seems to me to be nothing more than punch." "And what is better for a sore throat than good punch ?" returned Lord Howth. "Good punch at night, and copious gargles of old port by day would cure any mortal disease in life."

They forgot the gout, which proved to be Kelly's mortal foe at the last, but the story serves as a motto for his life, which is a record of much enjoyment, humour, and song, and notable friendships cemented by immeasurable beakers of fine wine.

CHAPTER I

The Prodigy of Dublin

The name of Kelly is a prolific one in Ireland, and the outstanding quality of the family has been a gift of music and ability in the art of acting. The immediate ancestor of the subject of this memoir, however, combined with music the art of deportment and the business of wine-merchant in Mary Street, Dublin ; for he, Thomas Kelly, was Master of the Ceremonies at Dublin Castle in those days of the eighteenth century when the Irish belles were as sedulous in acquiring grace and elegance before making their curtsey to the Vice-Regal Lords Buckinghamshire and Hertford as ever were the ladies of St. James's before approaching the King.

In the intervals of instructing the débutantes at the Castle, Thomas Kelly found time to marry a girl named M'Cabe, from the county Westmeath, and to rear a family of fourteen, all the children inheriting the musical tastes of their parents. In addition to Michael, it is only necessary to mention three of the sons : Mark, of whom more anon as the father of Fanny Kelly ; Patrick, a singer of great taste, who became a captain in the East India Company's service, and was killed, when still a young man, at the storming of Seringapatam ; and Joseph, who is mentioned by Thomas Moore as an ever-welcome guest at his mother's parties in Dublin. He says the well-known Joe Kelly's talents were of the "most agreeable kind," and that, having joined the profession of the stage when quite a youth, his " beautiful voice, and handsome face and person, met with considerable success." Joe Kelly was the inseparable companion of another young singer, Wesley Doyle, and their duets together were the delight of the gay, supper-giving society of the Irish capital during the last decade of the eighteenth century.

Michael Kelly, the eldest son of Thomas, was born in 1762,[1] and so early developed musical ability that at the age of three he was daily placed on the dining-table simultaneously with the wine in order to entertain his father's guests by singing. Very often he rendered Hawthorn's song, " There was a Jolly Miller," from Bickerstaffe's *Love in a Village* (1762). The boy possessed a powerful soprano voice, and was soon the pupil of a succession of music and singing masters, including Morland, a bibulous person who slept all day in a cellar, and who said his *morning* began at eleven o'clock at *night*, with the consequence that the infant Kelly received his music lessons sometimes at one o'clock in the morning, after the maestro had imbibed his heavy potations of whisky-punch. He was succeeded by Italians—Passerini and Peretti—who taught young Kelly all the operatic airs of the day. Naturally in Ireland the works of Isaac Bickerstaffe were popular, for he was Irish and had been a page in boyhood at the Vice-Regal Court during the Lord-Lieutenancy of the epistolary Lord Chesterfield. Michael Kelly particularly excelled in the song composed by Galuppi[1] for *Lionel and Clarissa*,[2] which, Kelly said, speaking of it forty years later, all the exponents of Lionel omitted, he supposed for the reason once given to him by an Irish post-boy, whom he was scolding for not driving faster: " By Jasus, masther, it is not an easy thing to work hard."

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[1] The actual year of Kelly's birth remains in doubt, as I have not succeeded in tracing the registration. In his *Reminiscences* he indicates that he was born about 1764, but, according to the age given in the register of his funeral, he was born two years earlier, and I am inclined to accept 1762 as the more probable date, bearing in mind the natural inclination of actors to forget the flight of time. As a youth he was very childish in appearance. W. H. Grattan Flood stated in Grove's *Dictionary of Music* that Michael Kelly was born " at Christmastide, 1762."

However, the juvenile Kelly determined to work hard at his singing (as indeed he did all his life), and his early resolve was the result of an amusing spur to ambition, which he thus narrates when speaking of his new singing-master, Signor St. Georgio:

" Trifling occurrences during childhood often influence our future lives. I recollect once I saw Signor St. Georgio enter a fruit-shop; he proceeded to eat peaches and nectarines, and at last took a pineapple, and deliberately sliced and ate that. This completed my longing, and while my mouth watered I asked myself why, if I assiduously studied music, I should not be able to earn money enough to lounge about in fruit-shops, and eat peaches and pineapples as well as Signor St. Georgio. I answered myself by promising that I would study hard, and I really did so, and, trifling as this little anecdote may appear, I firmly believe it was the chief cause of my serious resolution to follow up music as a profession, for my father had other views for me. His intention was to place me under Surgeon Neale, one of his oldest and most intimate friends, who, independently of his profession, ranked as one of the first violin players of his time, he had a most powerful hand, and his tone, expression, and taste nothing could surpass.

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[1] Baldassare Galuppi, also known as Buranello, from having been born in the island of Burano, near Venice. His first opera was produced at Venice in 1722.

[2] Produced in 1768: most of the music was composed by Charles Dibdin, then aged twenty-three. It was in 1772 that Bickerstaffe became involved in the scandal which caused his flight to France to escape a capital charge. He never returned, and died abroad in sad circumstances in 1816.

"My father had a private box at the theatre, and my mother, passionately fond of theatricals herself, often took me to the play. From the first time I saw him act, nothing ran in my head but Webster,[1] unless, indeed, it was the desire of going on the stage. I used to look at him with wonder when he was performing Macheath; and it certainly was a masterly performance. He had a fine figure, with a marked and rather handsome countenance; his voice was a fine baritone, with a sweet falsetto, of which, being a good musician, he made a judicious use, particularly in 'The Charge is Prepared.' Indeed, I think it impossible that his performance of this character could be surpassed. Whatever little credit and indulgence I received when I performed Macheath, at Drury Lane, I owe in a great measure to my recollections of him in the part; and I avow the same obligation to his Lionel, which was a *chef-d'œuvre.*"

Thus early were shaped events which in the coming years were to have such brilliant complementary sequels. Curiously, too, one of Kelly's schoolfellows at Doctor Burke's "academy in Dublin for young gentlemen" was Francis Goold, who thirty years later was to be associated with Kelly in the management of the Opera House in London. Goold's brother, Thomas, afterwards a barrister and Irish Master in Chancery, was also at Doctor Burke's school. Kelly relates of these early friends:

"At a beautiful villa, which their accomplished father had near Dublin, I frequently spent the vacations with them. Mr. Goold was an excellent judge of music, and all the men of genius then in Ireland used to meet at his house on Sundays. Kane

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[1] Webster lived with two married ladies, Mrs. Battershill and, later, Mrs. Baddeley, whose husband on one occasion fought a duel with another admirer of the lady, George Garrick, brother of the famous actor.

O'Hara,[1] the ingenious author of *Midas*, had a puppet-show for the amusement of his friends; it was worked by a young man of the name of Nick Marsh, who sang for Midas and Pan. He was a fellow of infinite humour; his parody on 'Shepherds, I have Lost my Love' was equal to anything written by the well-known Captain Morris[2]; and, with many others of equal merit, will be long remembered for the rich vein of humour which characterises it. The love of company, joined to a weak constitution, condemned this truly original genius to an early grave, regretted by all who knew him. In the performance of this fantoccini I sang the part of Daphne, and was instructed by the author himself. It was quite the rage with all the people of fashion, who crowded nightly to see the gratuitous performance."

Dublin in those days was a famous centre for music; the Rotunda Concerts and the Smock Alley and the Crow Street Theatres of the Irish capital were visited by all the great English and Continental artistes. Among the number was the famous Rauzzini,[3] who was so delighted with Michael Kelly's voice that he gave him some lessons, and strongly advised that the boy should be sent to study in Italy. He said to Thomas Kelly, the father : " My dear sir, depend upon it, your son will never follow any profession but that of a musician. He is now at the time of life to imbibe true taste, and in Italy only is it to be found. Let him go there, and depend upon it he will one day repay you for it." As the same advice was proffered by Sir William Parsons, the magistrate of Bow Street, who was also a distinguished musician and composer, the momentous step was resolved upon, though naturally poor Mrs. Kelly was antagonistic to the idea of her precocious young son going so far alone in days when travel was slow and attended by many dangers.

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[1] Kane O'Hara (1712–82) in *Midas* achieved a brilliant burlesque of Italian burletta. He was also the author of *The Golden Pippin* (1773) and *The Two Misers* (1775).

[2] Charles Morris (1745–1838), Captain 2nd Life Guards, one of the most characteristic men-about-town of Kelly's period, and, like him, a favourite of George IV. Morris's numerous songs on the joys of town, drinking, and love were published as *Lyra Urbanica*, 1840, though they had been sung at the far earlier gatherings of the Beefsteak Society, or, rather, The Sublime Society of Steaks, of which he was bard and punch-maker. His best remembered lines are those on the residential delights of London:

In London I'd live, then, in London I'd die,
For I never can relish the country, not I:
If one must have a villa in London to dwell,
Oh! give me the sweet shady side of Pall Mall.

Yet the exigencies of failing fortune compelled him to spend his last years at Brockham Green, in Surrey, where he died at the great age of ninety-three. Morris was buried in Betchworth churchyard.

[3] Kelly related some curious particulars of Rauzzini's early career: "He was a native of Rome, and made his first appearance on the stage there at the Teatro del La Valle. He was a great musician, had a fine voice, was very young, and so proverbially handsome that he always performed the part of the prima donna—at that period no woman was permitted to appear on the stage at Rome. [The present Pope has, I perceive, issued a veto against the performance of women on the stage, to take effect after the 1st of January, 1826.] His reception was highly flattering, and he afterwards performed in all the principal theatres in Italy. The Elector of Bavaria, who expended immense sums on his Italian Opera, invited him to Munich. His success at that Court was his bane: an exalted personage became deeply and hopelessly enamoured of him, and, spite of his talents, it was suggested to him that a change of air would be for the benefit of

Before he departed for Italy, Michael Kelly, though only fifteen or sixteen years of age, made two very successful appearances on the operatic stage of Dublin. A Portuguese, calling himself Il Cavaliere Don Pedro Martini, was at this date giving a season of Italian Opera at the Smock Alley Theatre, with an excellent company of artistes, including La Sestini, and Signori Pinnetti, Fochetti, and Savoy. The band, strengthened by performers from London, was, according to the etiquette of the time, in full dress, and so wore swords and bag-wigs like the company in the boxes and pit. The second opera to be produced was Piccini's *La Buona Figliola*, with Savoy in the important part of the Count, a rôle scored for a high soprano voice. But Savoy was taken suddenly and seriously ill just as expectation in Dublin was keen to hear this opera. Then, in Kelly's words :

" As there was no professional man to do it, the Portuguese turned his thoughts towards me, and offered my father his own terms, for I was well versed in the Italian language. He was backed in his application by the Duke of Leinster,[1] Mr. Conolly[2] of Castle Town, and several others who were ever kind and partial to me. They all seemed to feel that if I undertook the part I should gain both credit and emolument. This induced

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his health. He took the hint, and left Munich : he then engaged himself at the Italian Opera in London, where he attained the highest reputation both as a singer and composer ; and his acting as Pyramus, in the opera of *Pyramus and Thisbe*, was so fine that Garrick has often complimented him on it."

[1] The second Duke of Leinster (1749–1805), brother of Lord Edward FitzGerald, and the first Knight of St. Patrick, 1783.

[2] Thomas Conolly (1738–1803). Member in both the Irish and English Parliaments. He supported the Union.

my poor father to listen to them. I was delighted when I found that I was to perform on the Italian stage, and counted every tedious moment while studying my part. At length, however, the awful night arrived. The house was crowded, and I received great applause. I had a powerful treble voice, pronounced Italian well, was tall for my age, and acquitted myself beyond the most sanguine expectations of my friends. The opinion the foreign musical men gave of my abilities weighed, of course, greatly in my favour."

Soon after this brilliant début, there arrived in Dublin the son of Doctor Arne, Michael Arne,[1] who produced Garrick's *Cymon* at the Crow Street Theatre. He and the manager, Ryder, considering that Michael Kelly would be a great attraction, engaged the boy to play on the three occasions, with a clear benefit on the fourth night, and he, in rapture at the thought of again showing himself on the stage, accepted with enthusiasm the proposal. He duly played and sang Cymon, and on the fourth night took his benefit as Lionel to the Clarissa of Mrs. Arne in Bickerstaffe's opera, wherein he achieved an immense success before a house crowded in every part, for he sang his songs with all the beauty of his glorious soprano voice, and acted well—probably the youngest male exponent of a leading adult part in the history of opera. The cast for this remarkable production of *Lionel and Clarissa* was as follows :

Lionel	*Master Kelly.* (Being the last night of his appearing on the stage previous to his going to Italy.)
Sir John Flowerdale ..	*Mr. Heaphy*

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[1] Michael Arne (1741–86) also made an early stage début, in Otway's *Orphan*. He was the composer of many songs, and pieces for the harpsichord, on which instrument he was a skilled executant. The younger Arne died in great destitution, for he was of a dreamy, shiftless nature. Kelly stated that " Arne, not content with being one of the greatest musical geniuses the world ever produced, wished also to possess the philosopher's stone ; and, fancying himself a great alchymist, actually took a house at Richmond, near Dublin, and, neglecting all his pupils, gave himself up to a scientific search for gold. The consequences were ruin and a spunging-house. He was under articles to compose an opera for Covent Garden ; and, my father, knowing this, sent him, in his confinement, a pianoforte, and supplied him with wine ; while in ' durance vile ' he composed some beautiful music. In return for this kindness he gave me a lesson every day, and, after his release, continued particularly attentive to me."

Jessamy	*Mr. O'Keefe*
Harman	*Mr. Glenville*
Colonel Oldboy	*Mr. Wilder*
Jenkins	*Mr. Barrett*
Lady Oldboy	*Mrs. Heaphy*
Diana	*Miss Jameson*
Jenny	*Miss Tisdal*
Clarissa	*Mrs. Arne*

THE BAND: At the pianoforte, *Michael Arne*; Leader, the celebrated *Pinto*; First Oboe, *Bartlett Cooke* [father of Thomas Simpson Cooke (1782–1848), who was principal tenor at Drury Lane, 1815, and musical director of that theatre, 1821–42.]

The actor who played Jessamy was the celebrated John O'Keefe (1747–1833), later the author of many dramatic pieces, such as *Tony Lumpkin in Town* and *Wild Oats*; he also wrote the song, " I am a Friar of Orders Grey," for his opera of *Merry Sherwood.* O'Keefe states in his *Recollections* that his rendering of Jessamy, the tulip of fops, having been much approved, " many ladies of the highest rank, who patronised the youthful Michael Kelly, now asked me to step on the boards of Crow Street and play Beau Jessamy for the benefit of their young favourite, Master Lionel, who was just preparing for his voyage to Italy." O'Keefe was on the stage for twelve years in Dublin, but makes only brief mention of this period in his *Recollections*, owing to his unhappy marriage, in 1774, with Mary, daughter of Tottenham Heaphy, a well-known actor of the time, and proprietor of the Theatre Royal, Dublin. Presumably the Mr. and Mrs. Heaphy in the cast of *Lionel and Clarissa* were the parents or other near relatives of Mrs. O'Keefe. In conversation, however, O'Keefe would relate how excellent he was as Jessamy, Young Meadows, and the First Spirit in *Comus.* A contemporary friend of his states: " The fair and florid beauty of his youthful countenance, fine symmetrical person, though not tall, and unequalled melody of voice, rendered him an excellent representative of these and such-like characters." In old age he became blind. One of O'Keefe's dramas, *The Cap*, dealing with the infernal regions, was never produced, and the author destroyed the manuscript. Harris, the manager of Covent Garden Theatre, said the last scene " exceeds in horror and sublimity everything in poetry I ever met with. . . . Dante himself may stoop to this. . . . Had I attempted to produce it on the stage, half the ladies might have fainted, and the other half miscarried ! "

A few days after his appearance as Lionel, on May 1st, 1779, Michael Kelly bade farewell to his parents, and brothers and sisters, and set sail on a Swedish merchant ship for Italy, leaving, as he said, the shores of his native land " with no little fame, for, although not fifteen,[1] I had earned sufficient money to pay for my voyage to Italy, and for my maintenance and musical education for some time after my arrival there." Kelly took with him a grand pianoforte—then very scarce—which his father had had made for him in London, and with a good supply of sea stores, a gold watch, and ten guineas—the parting gift of the mother he was never to see again—Michael set forth on the first stage of the great adventure of life—life which for him was to be far more eventful than he could possibly have envisaged as the curtain rose.

The journey to Italy was long and hazardous. It occupied a month, amid stormy weather and a period of European warfare. He relates :

" My voyage took place during the American War, but the ship I was on board of, being a Swede, was under a neutral flag ; yet, in the Bay of Biscay we were hailed by an American privateer. Our captain lay to, while a set of the greatest ragamuffins my eyes ever beheld boarded us. They swore the vessel was under false colours, and proceeded to overhaul the captain's papers, and seize everything they could lay hands on. A sturdy ruffian began to break open my pianoforte case with a hatchet, which, when I saw, I manfully began to weep, and cry out, ' Oh ! my dear pianoforte.' The cabin-boy, who was about my own age, called out, ' For God's sake, don't cry, MASTER KELLY.' The chief mate of the privateer, who was quietly perusing some of our captain's papers, on hearing these words, turned round, and, looking stedfastly at me, said, ' Is your name Kelly ? ' I answered, ' Yes.' ' Do you know anything of a Mr. Thomas Kelly, of Mary Street, Dublin ? ' said he. ' He is my father,' was the reply. The young man immediately started up, ran to me, clasped me in his arms, and, with tears in his eyes, said, ‘ Don’t you remember me ? I am Jack Cunningham, who, when you were a little boy, nursed you and played with you.’ ”

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[1] Michael Kelly was probably sixteen at this date. See *ante*, p. 17.

The American mate proved to be the son of a gardener employed at the Kellys’ country house at Drumcondra, where the boy received many kindnesses from the family. But, taking to drink, and associating with bad companions, he was eventually implicated in a robbery, arrested, tried, and transported to America. The loss of his playmate had greatly affected little Michael Kelly, who recollected “ with gratitude the apples and plumbs which had been gathered for me by poor Jack Cunningham.” They met thus again for the last time, for, after the American privateersmen were satisfied as to the neutrality of the Swedish ship, they sailed away, and Kelly never heard of poor Jack again. The next day the boat was boarded and overhauled by an English sloop-of-war, to whom the Swedish captain gave particulars of the just-departed American privateer : but Michael hoped, for the sake of his early friend, that she was not destroyed.

Near the Isle of Ischia a tremendous storm was encountered ; the sea was mountains high, and poor little Kelly retired, seasick, to his cabin ; and glad enough he was the next morning, May 30th, 1779, when the cabin-boy came to tell him that they were in the Bay of Naples. He went on deck ; the weather was now beautiful, and spread out before him was that wonderful panorama of bays and buildings, the terrific Mount of Vesuvius, and the dominating Castle of St. Elmo.[1] The officers of health

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[1] Kelly gave some curious particulars of the nautical use to which this building was put : “ In consequence of the great height of the Castle of St. Elmo, vessels can be distinguished at an immense distance. This is rendered of great utility to the mercantile part of the community by means of signals made, according to the custom of all seaports, from the Castle on the approach of any vessel ; these signals consist of balls of great size projected into the air, the number of which signifies the description of vessel, whether frigate, sloop-of-war, merchantman, etc., etc., and at the same time the colour of the nation to which she belongs is hoisted. Thus a merchant, while transacting business in any part of Naples, may know what ships, and of what nations, are entering the bay, long before they reach the Mole. . . .

“ Lower down stands the Carthusian monastery of St. Martino. The fraternity are supposed to be very rich, and are celebrated for the excellence of their gastronomy. Their confectionery, wines, and dinners are of the first order, but only to be got at by a card of admission from the Prime Minister ; this is delivered to a lay-brother, who shows the bearer the chapel and all that is curious ; after came on board, and imparted the pleasing intelligence that, as the plague was raging on the coast of Africa, the passengers would have to undergo the regulations of quarantine. "An old tatterdemalion was put on board our vessel, to prevent our escaping to the shore. He was an inexhaustible source of amusement to me; for, although his clothes were all in tatters and patches, and spoke 'variety of wretchedness,' he wore his hair in an enormous bag, and carried a tremendously long sword by his side, of which I now almost wonder he did not give me a taste, for, if the truth must be told, I was very mischievous, and he a particularly good subject for my mirth."

Young Michael's next visitor was Father Dolphin, Prior of the Convent of St. Dominic, to whose care the boy had been charged during his stay in Naples. He was accompanied by another friar, and an Irish youth named Fleming, a cadet in the Irish Brigade, with whom Kelly struck up a great friendship. "He was my daily visitor; and what with the wines which we purchased from the boatmen, the delicious fruits, and good society, our bondage was not altogether unpleasant. Added to all the other *agrémens*, was the beautiful prospect around us; alongside of us was a Venetian vessel, also under quarantine, on board of which were several Italian singers, dancers, etc., on their way to the theatre at Palermo, and two brothers, very fine French horn players; besides many other passengers. In the evening they danced or sang on deck, and played duets on the French horn, while the Mole was crowded with all ranks of people to enjoy the sea breeze; so that the whole scene was delightful."

This vivid glimpse from a now vanished Neapolitan past fades, and, the order of release arriving, Kelly at last stepped on to the shores of Italy, the wonderland of his ambitious dreams—dreams which were to come true to the ultimate plaudit. His new friend and another cadet in the Irish Brigade, Plunket by name and Irish, of course, took him to an hotel near the Largo di Castello,

which he is invited to an excellent repast, for which they are forbidden to receive any remuneration."

The Carthusians, at any rate in England, are now restricted to a very meagre diet. At St. Hugh's Charterhouse, near Cowfold, Sussex, the Brethren only partake of one meal a day, in the morning, the fare consisting of eggs, cheese, bread, vegetables, and beer; secular guests are not invited. They have, of course, reverted to the original austerities of the Order, founded in 1086 by St. Bruno, and in the twelfth century the diet and conditions were much the same as to-day.

where the hostess, a compatriot of theirs, had for husband a Neapolitan, "an egregious rogue, who possessed the pleasing art of speaking English very well." Michael Kelly was but sixteen years of age, but he already displayed his social gifts, which were to win him so many distinguished friends in the future; his happy, gracious nature; his keen sense of humour, which, however mischievous, was ever kindly; his zest for life, pleasure, good food and fine wine, made him, even in these early days, a *boon* companion in the true meaning of the word. Now, as the recent adolescent star of the operatic stage in Dublin, he was a person of some importance in such a music-loving country as Italy, the birth-place of opera, and so it behoved him to see at once to the fitting adornment of his body, first as to modish clothes and then to his hair:

"I ordered a hairdresser—at that period an indispensable appendage to a man's establishment, and shortly a very well-dressed person, with his hair in a bag, and a sword by his side, entered my room; on inquiring his business, he informed me he was the barber, come according to order, to adorn me *à la mode di Napoli*. I at first felt abashed at the idea of employing so fine a gentleman in such a capacity, but I soon became reconciled to the national gaiety; for the very beggars, with hardly any clothes to their backs, had ragged bags tied to their hair."

The outer man attended to, spiritual duties were remembered, when Kelly, accompanied by Fleming and Plunket, went to hear mass at the church of San Giacomo. He then paid his first visit to Father Dolphin at the Convent of St. Dominic, a fine pile of buildings, close to the gate through which ran the road to Capua: "I found him in his study, which opened into a spacious garden, and everything around him breathed piety, benevolence, and content; he was about seventy years old, but full of health and activity. He received me with the greatest kindness . . . and the first advice the Father gave me, after taking some chocolate and snow-water, was to present my letter of introduction to Sir William Hamilton."[1]

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[1] Writing forty-six years after, Kelly said Father Dolphin introduced him that day to two of his Dominican friars—"one of them called Plunket, whom I often see in London even now (1825); the other named M'Mahon, whom I saw the last time I was in Dublin, at the Friary in Denmark Street; they were both Irishmen."

To the villa of the famous archæologist Michael Kelly at once proceeded, and there he was most kindly welcomed. Sir William Hamilton, the foster-brother of King George III, and British Ambassador at Naples since 1764, was at this date forty-nine years of age, and Emma Hart as yet unknown to him. His first wife was still living (she died in 1782). She had been Miss Barlow, whose father's estate was at Lawrenny, Pembrokeshire. She excelled as a musician, and gave concerts in Naples, where she was considered the finest pianoforte player in Italy. Sir William invited Kelly to dinner that first night to meet Lady Hamilton, the young Duke of Bedford,[1] and the celebrated singer, Mellico, who later in the evening played the harp as he sang enchantingly the canzonetta, "Io sparso tante lagrime." Next, little Kelly was asked to sing, so, accompanying himself on the pianoforte, he gave "Water Parted from the Sea," and Rauzzini's song, "Fuggiam da questo loco," to the great satisfaction of the company, Signor Mellico, in particular, saying many kind words of approbation.

Sir William Hamilton, the next day, entered fully into the discussion of Kelly's future, and he told the boy to state candidly his wishes and own ideas. Michael explained that his father's intentions were that he should study composition and the theory of music in Naples, and then return to England as a composer and teacher, but that his own inclinations were for the stage as a singer, for which career his father unfortunately had an aversion. As for the immediate question of a musical instructor, Kelly expressed his desire to become a pupil of the famous Finaroli, and was delighted when Sir William replied : " My dear lad, it is impossible to choose a more able instructor, or a better man. I know him intimately, and will introduce you to him, and recommend you to his care."

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[1] Francis, fifth Duke of Bedford (1765–1802), at this date a boy of thirteen, and presumably on a visit to Sir William Hamilton. In later years he built Russell and Tavistock Squares in London, about 1800, thereby greatly increasing the wealth of his family. He never married, and died at the early age of thirty-six. He had a predilection for the antique siren, Nancy Parsons (also known as Mrs. Anne Horton), who, after being the mistress of the Duke of Grafton and other men, succeeded in securing as a husband the second Viscount Maynard, in 1776. Ten years later, when the Duke of Bedford came of age, Horace Walpole makes merry over the fight the Dowager Duchess (the young Duke's grandmother) put up against being turned out of Woburn at the advent of Lady Maynard: "I have heard that the Duke of Bedford has ordered all his palaces to be made ready for him. If it is only to make room for another antique, old woman for old woman, I should think one's own grandmother might be preferable to one that, for many reasons, might be grandmother of half London. . . . I admire the Duchess Dowager for holding out Woburn to the last moment. We shall now see which of the venerable matrons triumphs."

Curiously enough, it would seem that the Duke of Bedford first came under the influence of Lady Maynard when a youth at Naples, for in the year—1779—that Kelly mentions meeting him there, Walpole writes on March 9th: "I asked you about a report of Lord Maynard's sudden death. We knew it was false, and that his wife, who has always some fascinating powder, has established herself at the Court of Naples by dispensing James's. They say she is universally visited, except by those English prudes, the Countesses of Berkeley and Orford."

Sir William Hamilton gave Kelly much good advice. On the morning following the dinner, Michael had been directed to call at his new patron's house at eight o'clock, but he was three-quarters of an hour late in arriving. On entering the room, he found the Ambassador, with Mr. Drummond, his physician, and two antiquaries, around a table covered with cameos, intaglios, and lava, for Sir William had made many ascents of Vesuvius. Hamilton looked seriously at the tardy youth, and said : " My good boy, you were to have been here at eight ; it is now three-quarters of an hour past : if you do not learn to keep time, you will never be a good musician."

Throughout his life, Kelly remembered that apt hint.

CHAPTER II

Italy in the Eighteenth Century

Sir William Hamilton, quoting Gay, advised " To-day for pleasure, to-morrow for business—and when you begin, you must bear in mind that nothing is to be done without steady application. But now, as it is natural for you to wish to see the sights of Naples, take a fortnight's pleasure." He then handed over a tip of " a purse of twenty ounces,"[1] and, with another six ounces presented by Father Dolphin, Michael Kelly sallied forth to see the wonders of Naples in the company of his young compatriot, Fleming, the cadet in the Irish Brigade. And at once they were in the midst of all the bustle and pageantry and merriment of the town which " never goes to bed," and in those days it was more animated even than now when the gay Lazzaroni are dispossessed of their ancient quarters. Kelly saw the streets thronged with mountebanks, sailors, monks, abbês, and lawyers :[2]

" At noon they flock to the coffee-houses, shops, and promenades. Twelve o'clock is their usual hour of dinner, after which they take the siesta, rising usually an hour or two before sunset, and repairing again to the coffee-houses to eat ice, which is in Italy beyond conception fine. Their chocolate, melons, grapes, peaches, are delicious ; my favourite was the harlequin, which is a mixture of all, served up in a silver cup, piled like a pagoda, which cost then only twopence English. Even the Lazzaroni have their cooling luxuries ; at the corner of every street there are stalls belonging to vendors of water-melons, iced and lemonade water, crying out ' Bella cosa è la acqua fresca.' (' What a beautiful thing is fresh water.') For a *novo callo* (half a farthing) a man (at the time I am speaking of) could get a large glass of iced water, with the juice of a lemon, and a slice of water-melon in it."

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[1] Michael Kelly had told Sir William Hamilton that his annual allowance from his father while he was studying in Italy was to be two hundred Neapolitan ounces (£80), so Sir William's tip was equivalent to about £8.

[2] Kelly says there were calculated to be then in the kingdom of Naples quite twenty thousand lawyers, most of them younger members of noble families whom poverty had condemned to the legal profession. " There is no nation, however large, in which so many law-suits are carried on."

On the same lines of remarkable cheapness the two boys now dined at the San Carlino tavern, and at an expenditure of eighteenpence each partook of the following wonderful meal: "maccaroni stuffato, bouilli, stewed veal, fried calamara,[1] a roasted chicken, sallad, cheese, fruit, biscuits, two bottles of wine, a cup of coffee each, and a glass of chasse caffé, with iced lemonade." Alas! for the days that are no more.

Then the two youths saw Naples *and* Mori—and did not die, for the classic saying has two meanings:

Vedi Napoli e poi mori
(*See Naples, and then die*),

and

Vedi Napoli e poi Mori
(*See Naples, and then Mori*).

Because Mori is a beautiful little island near Naples which the Neapolitans think the second most lovely place in the world. Kelly and Fleming visited Posilipo, the Grotto del Cane, and Virgil's tomb; Baiæ and its burning sands; they ascended Vesuvius, which was vomiting flames and lava, the aftermath of the great eruptions of 1776 and 1777:

"We returned to sleep at Portici; the next morning we had an excellent breakfast of ham, fresh figs, and a bottle of *lagrima Christi*. (As I was brought up a rigid Roman Catholic, I was shocked at the name given to this delicious wine, but in time my scruples were overcome, and I now often take a bottle.) After discussing which, Fleming and myself mounted our donkies, and, accompanied by our guides, began the ascent of Mount Vesuvius. We passed through fields covered with fig and mulberry trees, and our guide pointed out the favourite retreat of Pergolesi, the great composer.[1] Here he was said to indulge his fatal tendency to melancholy ; yet, perhaps, had he not been of that melancholy temperament, he would not have composed his celebrated *La stabat Mater dolorosa*, or his intermezzo, ' La Serva Padrona.' He died at the early age of twenty-seven, it was supposed by poison, given by a brother composer, jealous of his transcendent talents. We had some conversation with the hermit who lived on the mountain ; he was a Frenchman, and said to have been formerly a hairdresser in London ; whether this be a fact or not, I cannot say : the subject was much too delicate to touch upon with a recluse in such a situation. The mountain seemed in a most villainous humour, emitting flames and large bodies of lava. I soon had enough of it, and was right glad to find myself once more at Portici, with a supper of red mullet before me. The next morning we returned to Naples."

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[1] The calamary or cuttle-fish, which discharges a fluid used for sepia. Kelly added: "The calamara, or ink-fish, is as great a favourite with the Neapolitans as it was with the ancient Romans. An Italian told me that he had once eaten it many years before at Brighton; I was for several seasons inquiring for it there in vain. At length an old fisherman brought me one: even he had never heard of its being eaten, or eatable, for, when caught there, it is always thrown away. It is quite black, but when washed, near a pint of ink comes from it, and it appears like snow; when fried it eats like a veal cutlet, and is a great luxury. On the 25th of September, 1819, I had one, and my friends, who partook of it, said it was delicious."

Much more to the taste of Kelly was the noise of Naples than the thunders of the great volcano ; he preferred the excitements of the calash to those of precipitate lava :

" Calashes are to be found at the corners of all the principal streets of Naples. A calash is a small narrow gilt chair, set between two wheels, and without springs, drawn by one horse, which is guided by a cord tied round its nose without bridle or bit. The driver, who usually wears his hair in a net, sometimes sports his night-cap, with a gold-laced hat over it, gets up behind, and, to do you honour, endangers your neck, driving helter-skelter through the streets, even through the Toledo Street, the longest and most populous one in all Naples, I think as long as Oxford Street, and actually swarming with friars, lawyers, and Lazzaroni. All the time he bellows, with the lungs of a stentor, ' Make way there for Milord Inglese.' "

It was highly delightful thus to be classed with the British aristocracy, of which some very magnificent specimens were resident in Naples, including the Earl-Bishop, that remarkable Earl of Bristol who was also Bishop of Derry. Naples was the scene of much social splendour at this date, when the glories of the old world of wealth and rank were still undimmed. The

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[1] Giovanni Battista Pergolesi died in 1737. He had gone to Torre del Grecco, at the foot of Vesuvius, as he was threatened with pulmonary disease. It was there he composed the exquisite *Stabat Mater*.

Italian nobility lived in princely state with vast revenues and retinues, and the visiting English nobles were as prodigal in their display; their carriages were preceded by running footmen (hence the origin of the word "footman"), who ran before the cantering and prancing horses with amazing speed and lightness as the great milords drove along the shore of the bay to Posilipo. Most magnificent of all was Lord Tylney, an Irish peer of immense wealth (whose title became extinct at his death in 1784); he gave wonderful dinners, concerts, and balls; and Kelly saw his huge carriage, drawn by six splendid cream-coloured horses, with four running footmen in advance, and a great many more behind.[1] The second Earl Tylney (1712–84) was the grandson of the rich banker, Sir Joshua Child, who founded Child's Bank, by Temple Bar. His estate, Wanstead House, Essex, was a florid palace, on which £100,000 had been expended, and as much again on the gardens, according to Horace Walpole, who described the second Earl as "the most generous creature in the world; in the first chamber I entered he offered me four marble tables that lay in cases about the room: I compounded, after forty refusals of everything I commended, to bring away only a haunch of venison."

Lord Tylney's vast wealth and estates were inherited by his nephew, Sir James Tylney-Long, whose daughter carried her rich inheritance, by her marriage in 1812 with William Pole-Wellesley (nephew of the Duke of Wellington), to the most lamentable spendthrift in social history. He dissipated the whole of his wife's property; the contents of Wanstead House were sold in 1822, and the great house was razed to the ground, and its gorgeous fittings sold in lots. The unhappy heiress died broken-hearted three years later; her profligate husband, who had succeeded to the Earldom of Mornington, married a second wife in 1828, and this lady, who survived until 1869, was so impoverished that at one time she was an inmate of St. George's Workhouse. A portion of the grounds of Wanstead House survives in the present public Wanstead Park, where is the famous grotto on which it is said Mrs. Tylney-Long-Wellesley spent £40,000.

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[1] These footmen, or *volanti*, ran at incredible speed. Kelly noticed later at Padua "races on the Corso by running footmen, whose speed, I think, would astonish the English patrons of pedestrianism."

For the most part, small suburban villas now stand on what was once the stately domains of Lord Tylney. The aspects of the property in 1834 are depicted by Thomas Hood in his early novel, *Tylney Hall*; the author at that date lived at Lake House, Wanstead, which had been the banqueting-hall of the great house.

As for the spendthrift, he did not even deserve the burlesque benediction bestowed upon him in *Rejected Addresses*:

Bless every man possessed of aught to give;
Long may Long Tylney Wellesley Long Pole Live.

Speaking of Lord Tylney's running footmen, it is of interest to note that the great bass singer, Morelli, was originally a *volante* or running footman in the service of another English noble, the third Earl Cowper (a Count of the Holy Roman Empire, who died at Florence in 1789). One evening, when going to bed, Lord Cowper's attention was attracted by someone singing an air from a popular opera with exquisite taste and prodigious volume of voice. The mysterious singer was seated on the steps of a church opposite, and Lord Cowper ordered his valet to find out his identity. The valet replied: "It is young Giovanni, one of your lordship's *volanti*. His ear for music is so perfect that, whatever melody he hears, he catches it instantly; he often sings to the servants, and is the delight of us all." On the following morning, by order, Giovanni was brought to Lord Cowper's breakfast-room, and sang several songs in a manner that astonished his master even more. He then summoned various musical *cognoscenti* to hear the boy, and they all declared that he only needed instruction in order to become the finest basso profundo in the world. "Then," said Lord Cowper, "from this moment I take him under my protection, and he shall have the best instruction Italy can afford." He kept his word. Kelly added: "For two years Morelli had the first masters that money could procure. At the end of that time, he was engaged as primo buffo at Leghorn. He then went the round of all the principal theatres with great *éclat*. At the Teatro del La Valle, in Rome, he was perfectly idolised, often singing at the Carnival. He was engaged at the Pergola Theatre; and his success, on his return to Florence, was triumphant indeed. I have often heard him say that the proudest day of his life was that on which his former master, Lord Cowper, invited him to dine with him. This must, indeed, have been gratifying to him ; but what honour does it not reflect on the liberality of his noble and generous patron." [1]

Kelly, of course, visited the numerous theatres of Naples. The San Carlos he knew was long ago destroyed by fire, so his description of the great building is of interest. Even in the middle of the eighteenth century the seats in the pit had stuffed cushions and arm-rests, but an obsolete arrangement was that each seat locked up, and the subscriber retained the key for the duration of the performance. There were seven tiers of boxes ; on the front of each box was a mirror illuminated by two large wax tapers ; these, multiplied by reflection and added to by the blaze of light from the stage, made a dazzling display. Each box on the grand tier had a small withdrawing-room attached to it, where the pages of the theatre waited to hand ices and sweetmeats to the quality. At this house, Kelly heard the opera of *Olimpiade* by Metastasio and Metzlevisic, with the celebrated male soprano, Marchesi, in the part of Megacle. Ansani was the principal tenor, and his wife, Macherini, the leading female singer ; she was called by the Neapolitans, " La Cantante con la parruca," as she was obliged to wear a wig, her head having been shaved during a severe illness. The ballets at this theatre were mounted with extreme splendour. Four hundred persons and eighty horses figured in *Il Disfatta di Dario.* Madame Rossi was the first ballerina. She danced Mandane in *Artaxerxes* to the Artabanes of Richard Blake, an Irish boy, who, like Kelly, had gone abroad when very young ; he became a very fine pantomime actor and the best grotesque dancer of the time. Kelly also saw him as Sancho Panza in a comic ballet, *The Achievements of Don Quixote.*

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[1] Horace Walpole relates another example of Lord Cowper's generosity : " He has given a pension of two hundred pounds a year to an old friend of his aunt, Lady Frances Elliot, who had left her but a bare thousand pounds : you cannot imagine how I admire him for it." But Walpole could never forgive Lord Cowper for preferring to live altogether in Florence, whence he would not even return on the death of his father, and for accepting the title of Prince Nassau from the Emperor : " An English Earl who has never seen his earldom, and takes root and bears fruit at Florence, and is proud of a pinchbeck principality in a third country, is as great a curiosity as any in the Tuscan collection." And when Lord Cowper at last came to England, in 1786, Walpole was full of anxiety to see this, to him, so strange individual : " Curiosity carried me to a great concert at Mrs. Cosway's t'other night—not to hear Rubinelli, who sung one song at the extravagant price of ten guineas, and whom for as many shillings I have heard sing half a dozen at the Opera House ; no, but I was curious to see an English Earl who had passed thirty years at Florence, and is more proud of a pinchbeck principality and a paltry Order from Wirtemberg than he was of being a peer of Great Britain, when Great Britain *was* something. He answered very well to my idea, for I should have taken his Highness for a Doge of Genoa : he has the awkward dignity of a temporary representation of nominal power. Peace be with him and his leaf-gold."

Calashes, theatres, and taverns having now exhausted the tips of Sir William Hamilton and Father Dolphin, Kelly repaired to the Conservatorio of La Madonna di Loretto to commence his musical studies under Finaroli, a well-known composer of church music and operas :

" Finaroli was a light, animated little man, about fifty ; he heard me sing, and was pleased to say I evinced promising abilities. He took me to see his Conservatorio, in which there were between three and four hundred boys, who studied composition, singing, and the playing of all kinds of instruments. There were several rooms, but in the great schoolroom, into which I was introduced, there were some singing, others playing upon the violin, haut-boy, clarionet, horn, trumpet, etc., etc., each different music, and in different keys. The noise was horrible ; and, in the midst of this terrific Babel, the boy who studied composition was expected to perform his task, and harmonise a melody given him by his master. On or after October 17th, the boys of the three Conservatori are obliged to attend, morning and evening, for nine days, at the Franciscan Church in their dresses. It is by attending this festival, and performing without remuneration, that they are exempt, by the King's permission, from all taxes on provision and wine, which are paid by every other class of inhabitant."

Despite this vinous privilege, Kelly did not at all like the idea of walking in the processions at the Franciscan Church after the Host and wearing the college dress, which was incumbent upon all the pupils of the Conservatorio ; and naturally, in view of his recent successes in star parts on the operatic stage of Dublin, he was averse to becoming one of the herd of boys striving to study in the Babel of the great schoolroom. He stated his objections to Father Dolphin, who conveyed them to Finaroli. The musician was favourable to special treatment, and replied : " I have taken a liking to the boy, and will receive him as an inmate ; he shall have a small apartment on the ground-floor of the house where I live, and eat at my table. In addition to this, he will have the benefit of visiting the Conservatorio daily, and receive all the advantages of a scholar with private instruction, without being obliged to put on the dress or perform the duties." So it came about, and Kelly's only cause of regret was that he could make but little use of the beloved pianoforte he had brought from Ireland, for Finaroli made it a *sine qua non* that it should not be used for singing practice, for he and, " indeed, all Italian masters think it highly prejudicial to the voice."

Michael Kelly was soon fulfilling singing engagements at the houses of the Neapolitan nobility, and he is said to have been the first Englishman who sung thus in Italy as a professional. At the palazzos of the Princess Belmonte, the Princess Ghigi, the Duchess of Castel Duoro, the Marchese del Vasto, the Marchese St. Marca, and others, after music, the hostess would hold a faro or basetto bank, or the game would be berabis or lotteria—" indeed, the whole delight of the Neapolitans, high and low, seemed to be gambling of one sort or another." At the house of La Signora Morretti, an excellent musician, he met the celebrated composer, Cimarosa (1754–1801), who had been the favourite pupil of his own master, Finaroli. Cimarosa used to sing his comic songs, " replete with humour and taste," accompanying himself. Sir William Hamilton introduced Kelly at many influential houses, and also to the King and Queen of Naples at one of their open-air concerts at Posilipo. " Here," said Sir William, " is a lad from Ireland ; come to study music in Naples." Kelly relates :

" The first question the King asked was, ' Ne siete cristiano ? ' ' I say, are you a Christian ? ' ' I hope I am, sire,' was my reply. Shortly afterwards he commanded me to sing an English song, and I put forth my strength in ' By Him We Love Offended,' from *The Duenna*. Her Majesty then ordered an Italian air, and I sang ' Io sparso tante lagrime ' ; they seemed pleased, and Her Majesty, after asking me, with great affability, how I liked Naples, where I lived, who was my instructor, etc., invited me to take some ice and a glass of Maraschino. I need not say with what pleasure I obeyed the command, nor how much my young mind was elated at Her Majesty's condescension.

" Her Majesty had a fair complexion, and beautiful hair. It was said at Naples that she bore a strong resemblance to her mother, Maria Theresa, Empress of Germany. I confess I did not think her particularly handsome. She had the character of a busy, meddling woman, and the reputation of governing the King and the kingdom completely; indeed, in all matters of business he was accustomed to refer to her, saying, 'Go to the Lady, she understands affairs better than I do'; and, judging by all I ever heard on the subject, he was in the right.

"The King was very tall, near-sighted, with very light eyebrows, and remarkably fair hair. He was very partial to theatricals, and when he went to Caserta (one of his palaces), in which there was a beautiful little theatre, he often condescended to act in burlettas with the Queen. They uniformly took the parts of the principal buffo and buffa; the graver and more important characters were filled by the lords and ladies of the Court. His Majesty was a man of excellent heart. Had this monarch possessed the advantages of a common education, he might have done much for his country; but it was with difficulty he could even write his name, and, consequently, he left everything to the Queen, the Marquis Tenucci, his former and but too indulgent tutor, and the Chevalier Acton, an extremely clever man and Minister, and, above all, as it was said, a great favourite with Her Majesty.

"The King, uneducated as he was, was proportionably fond of field sports; he was perpetually hunting,[1] shooting, or fishing, in which exploits he was usually accompanied by Sir William Hamilton, to whom he was very partial. Upon these occasions His Majesty would go out into the Bay, with a large escort of fishermen, and not return until a quantity of fish was caught, which was sent to Santa Lucia (the fish-market) for sale. The convents had the first choice, the remaining part went to the best bidder, and the money arising from the sale was distributed amongst the poor.

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[1] The Margravine of Anspach (Lady Craven) gives an unpleasant glimpse of Ferdinand's "sporting" prowess in her *Memoirs*: "The immense quantities of game preserved in the royal parks and woods at Caserta, Caccia Bella, and Astruni exceeds all credibility: wild boars, and stags, and deer of every kind were slaughtered without mercy. The King never missed a shot, and would cut up the animals after they were killed with all the skill of a butcher. The Queen was often obliged to witness these scenes. His Majesty's skill on the water was equal to that on land; he harpooned, or caught fish, and was regardless of cold, hunger, fatigue, or danger. He was generally attended by a number of the inhabitants of the Lipari Islands, who have always been particularly skilful as fishermen."

"Another of his amusements was the game of *pallone*, which he often played in a court built for that purpose in the Largo di Castello, and any person dressed decently was admitted to see him. One day, when I was among the spectators, he came to me and asked whether I had ever seen the game played in England. But, skilful as he was at this amusement, he performed one feat which surpassed all competition; I mean the eating of maccaroni, of which he was very fond. This exhibition, I honestly confess, surprised me most of any thing I had ever seen of a king or subject. He seized it in his fingers, twisting and pulling it about, and cramming it voraciously into his mouth, most magnanimously disdaining the use of either knife, fork, or spoon, or indeed any aid except such as Nature had kindly afforded him."

This King, of course, was Ferdinand IV, King of Naples, and later of the Two Sicilies. Born in 1751, he succeeded to the twin thrones in Italy at the age of eight, when his father, Don Carlos of Bourbon, became King of Spain. The long reign of Ferdinand lasted for sixty-five years (thus beating the records of George III and Victoria in England, but not the sixty-eight year reign of his wife's great-grand-nephew, the Emperor Francis Joseph of Austria), although for two periods of some years he was compelled to withdraw to Sicily before the victorious armies of Napoleon, who, in turn, made Joseph Bonaparte and Murat King of Naples. But, after the downfall of Napoleon, Ferdinand returned finally to Naples, and his last years of rule were mild and orderly, except for trouble with the Austrians in 1821. Many of the early turmoils of his reign were caused by his wife, Maria Carolina (the daughter of Maria Theresa and sister of Marie Antoinette), a clever woman, delighting in intrigue, and who, indeed, was the virtual ruler of her easy-going[1] husband's kingdoms, aided by Tenucci and then the young Englishman, John Francis Acton (1736–1811), who rose as rapidly from the rank of a naval officer in the Tuscan service to that of a general in the Neapolitan army, and then to the office of supreme Minister of the Government of Naples, as ever did any favourite of Catherine of Russia. In Naples it was whispered that "Hic, Hæc, Hoc" represented Acton, the Queen, and the King (as neuter). The Queen was suspected of sympathy with the mysterious Society of the Illuminati, a secret and powerful organisation which arose in 1776 under the direction of Adam Weishaupt, a student of the University of Ingolstadt, being outwardly devoted to intellectual power and the abolishing of evils arising from tyranny, but undoubtedly aiming at revolutionary measures and the subjugation of civilisation and Christianity. The Queen also intrigued politically with Napoleon (the enemy of her husband's country) after he had married her grand-niece, Marie Louise. It was well for Naples when Maria Carolina died in 1814, for then was dispersed the unhealthy atmosphere of intrigue and plot which had enveloped the Court through many years. Ferdinand, as a good-natured, sport-loving King, was popular in the manner such monarchs always achieve, despite their obvious faults of character and lack of ruling qualities. Ferdinand was a king who aped Haroun al Raschid; he paid surprise visits to the poorest of his people and rubbed shoulders with the roughest. He was adored by the Lazzaroni of Naples, that noisy, tattered band—not beggars in the destitute sense of the word, but idle, care-free loafers, fishermen, workmen who were shy of work, and a sprinkling of brigands from the country. They were, in fact, a sort of vast gypsy tribe, with their own patois, laws, and customs.[1] And their own songs; when their beloved King Ferdinand came among them, and in carnival

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[1] Kelly relates an amusing example of Ferdinand's good-nature and *bonhomie* with his subjects: "The delight of the Lazzaroni, and the common people in general, was Jean Cole, the famous Pulcinello. He performed twice a day in a little theatre called San Carlino, on the Largo di Castello. The house was always crowded, and even the King and Court frequented it to enjoy Cole's comic powers. Whatever Jean Cole said was received with rapture. Once, when the King was at the theatre, he was performing in the piece called *Pulcinello in Disgrace*; in the midst of a dialogue with another actor he exclaimed, 'Oh, Naples! Naples!

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dear, dear Naples, beautiful Naples! I shall never see thee more! How happy I was in thee! My royal and gracious master, the King, used to order maccaroni, *lagrima Christi*, and other dainties to be sent to me; but, alas! that is over. He has forgotten the good custom, and poor Pulcinello! oh, poor Pulcinello!' The King laughed heartily, and, taking the hint, the next morning sent Jean Cole a massive silver tureen, filled with maccaroni."

[1] As Mr. Walter Sichel so well puts it in his *Emma, Lady Hamilton*, the Lazzaroni are the product of "their sultry climate, their mongrel blood, their red-hot soil, and their pagan past."

time aped a fisherman amidst the crowds on the quays, the Lazzaroni would sing:

S'è levata la gabella alla farina!
Evviva Ferdinando e Carolina!

Michael Kelly relates an amusing instance of how the Lazzaroni turned to their King for help when they were overcome by superstitious terror during the great eruption of Vesuvius in 1779:

"The Lazzaroni are a fine, hardy race of men, and, it is calculated, amount to fifty thousand. It cannot be ascertained how the greater number of them find subsistence, as those who work at all will only do so to earn as much as will keep them from starving. With scarcely any covering, they sleep on the steps of the church doors, or in the street. Their favourite spot, however, is the Largo di Castello; there they literally swarm, and pass the whole day playing the game of *mora*; or, by way of variety, listening to some ragged fellow near the Mole, who recites lively stories from Boccaccio in the Neapolitan jargon, and perhaps sings the verses of Tasso, or Ariosto, or details the feats of Masaniello, the rebel fisherman. All the time he exhibits, they sit round him with fixed and mute attention. I have myself often stopped to listen to the half-naked improvisatore, and have been delighted by his dry humour and inimitable gesticulation.

"It is remarkable that, notwithstanding the vices of these people, and the extraordinary cheapness of wine in Naples, I never, during my sojourn there, witnessed a single instance of intoxication. The Neapolitans in general hold drunkenness in abhorrence. A story is told there of a nobleman, who, having murdered another in a fit of jealousy, was condemned to death. His life was offered to him on the sole condition of his saying that, when he committed the deed, he was intoxicated. He received the offer with disdain, and exclaimed, 'I would rather suffer a thousand deaths than bring eternal disgrace on my family by confessing the disgraceful crime of intoxication.' He persisted, and was executed.

"The Lazzaroni are dreadful thieves; but theft they mildly denominate sleight of hand. I once saw one of them pick a gentleman's pocket of a handkerchief at one end of the Largo di Castello, and offer it to him for sale at the other; yet had the pillaged man, or any other person, spoken, or even made a motion expressive of displeasure at the bare-faced infamy of the action, it is a thousand to one but that he would have been stilettoed on the spot. They are indeed such a formidable and united body that the King himself finds it politic to persuade them that he feels flattered by being called their Captain.

"In the month of August, 1779, which will be remembered for their lives by all those who chanced to be in Naples at that period, happened one of the most terrific irruptions of Vesuvius that ever was recollected by man. At that time, a great fair was held in the Piazza San Ferdinando, and the Largo di Castello; I was at the fair when the mountain first began to throw forth its lava, and during the whole duration of the irruption I was permitted to be near Sir William Hamilton, and this was indeed a most fortunate circumstance for me, for, independent of his scientific knowledge, he was respected by all the better classes, and a favourite with the Lazzaroni into the bargain, who often lamented that so good a man must be eternally punished, since he was a heretic.

"Vesuvius continued to throw up such abundance of lava that, had the wind been in a different direction, Naples and Portici must have been swallowed up; for, on the opposite side, whole villages, vineyards, etc., were destroyed. During two days the scene was most appalling—horror and dismay were in every countenance, and despair in every heart.

"The Lazzaroni, as usual, appealed to their patron saint and protector, St. Januarius, and went in a body to the palace of the Archbishop of Naples, to demand the keys of the church where the figure of the saint is kept, that they might carry him off, and place him *vis-à-vis* to the villainous mountain; well convinced that, at the bare sight of his wooden countenance, it would cease roaring. The Archbishop, however, having intimation of their approach, and thinking, with Falstaff, that 'the better part of valour is discretion,' retreated by a private way in his carriage, and set off for his palace at Capua, too far distant to be followed by the Lazzaroni on foot. Indeed, his Eminence had good reasons for supposing that, had those mirrors of integrity got possession of the saint, they might, when he had quelled the mountain, have carried their gratitude so far as to ease him of the weight of diamonds and other precious gems with which his head and body were covered—a species of toilette to which his Excellency was wisely unwilling to subject his Saintship.

"The Lazzaroni, finding themselves disappointed, held a council, and I saw them in an immense body march to Posilipo, whither the King and Queen had retired, determined to force the King to order the saint to be given up to them. The King appeared on the balcony to address them, but in vain; the Queen also (enceinte) came forward, but without avail. The Royal guard and a Swiss regiment were ordered to disperse them; but they were not to be intimidated; neither entreaties nor menaces could divert them from their purpose. 'The saint! The saint! give us up our saint!' was the universal cry. Just as popular fury was at its height, a man appeared, whom, the moment they saw, the wolves became lambs; the mob fell on their knees before him bareheaded and in total silence. He addressed them in the following conciliatory manner:

"'What do you come here for, ye infamous scoundrels? Do ye want to disturb our saint, in his holy sanctuary, by moving him? Think ye, ye impious rascals, that if St. Januarius had chosen to have the mountain silent, ere this, he would not have commanded it to be so? Hence! to your homes, ye vagrants! away! be off! lest the saint, enraged at your infamous conduct, should order the earth to open, and swallow you up!'

"This soothing speech, aided by a kick to one, and a knock on the head to another (fairly dealt to all within his reach), dispersed them without a single murmur. So that what the supplication of their sovereign, backed by the soldiery, could not effect, was accomplished by one man, armed indeed with superstition, but with nothing else.

"This man was Father Rocco, well known to have possessed the most unbounded power over the lower orders in Naples; of no Saint in the calendar (St. Januarius excepted) did they stand in such awe as of Father Rocco. He was a sensible, shrewd man, and used the power he possessed with great discretion. He was much in the confidence of the Chevalier Acton, and the other Ministers. Previous to his time, assassinations were frequent at night in the streets, which were in utter darkness; and the Government dared not interfere to have them lighted, lest they should offend the Lazzaroni; but Father Rocco undertook to do it. Before each house in Naples there is a figure of a Madonna, or some saint, and he had the address to persuade the inhabitants that it was a mortal sin to leave them in the dark.

"I was myself the witness of the following ridiculous scene. One evening a group of Lazzaroni were very attentively playing at their favourite game of *mora*; beside them was a puppet-show, in which Punch was holding forth with all his might. Father Rocco suddenly appeared amongst them. The first step the holy man took was to sweep into his pouch all the money staked by the gamblers; then, turning to the spectators of Punch, he bawled out, 'So, so, ye rapscallions! Instead of going out to fish for the convents and support your families, ye must be loitering here, attending to this iniquitous Punch, this lying varlet!' Then, lifting up a large wooden cross, suspended by huge beads round his waist, he lustily belaboured all within his reach, lifting up the cross at intervals, and crying out, 'Look here, you impious rogues! *Questo è il vero Pulcinello*—This is the true Punch, you impious villains.' And, strange as this mixture of religious zeal and positive blasphemy may appear, they took their thrashing with piety, and departed peaceably like good Catholics. I got out of his way with great alertness, feeling no desire to become a disciple of such a *striking* school of religious instruction."

Kelly describes another amusing instance of the superstitious Lazzaroni and the guile of the priests:

"I went with Aprile[1] to visit the miracle of San Gennaro or Januarius in the Cathedral; the King and Queen in state, attended his Saintship. There were two immense orchestras erected in the church, and all good professors, vocal and instrumental, were engaged to perform upon these occasions. The Archbishop prays, or appears to pray, while the Te Deum is sung. He then displays a phial, which contains the congealed blood of San Gennaro; towards this he holds up a large wax taper, that the people may perceive it is congealed. The miracle consists, as everybody knows, in this blood dissolving before the congregation, and is supposed to be performed by the saint himself. As soon as it is liquified, the Archbishop roars lustily, ‘ The miracle is accomplished.’ The Te Deum is again sung, and the whole congregation prostrate themselves before the altar of the saint with gratitude and devotion, and every face beams with delight.

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[1] See later, p. 52.

“ On one of those miraculous days, I witnessed a ludicrous scene. It happened, by some accident, that the Archbishop could not make the miracle work. The Lazzaroni and old women loudly called on the Virgin for assistance. ‘ Dear Virgin Mary ! Blessed Madonna ! Pray use your influence with San Gennaro ! Pray induce him to work the miracle ! Do we not love him ? Do we not worship him ? ’ But, when they found the saint inexorable, they changed their note, and seemed resolved to abuse him into compliance. They all at once cried out, ‘ Porco di San Gennaro ! ’—‘ You pig of a saint ! ’—‘ Barone maledetto ! ’—‘ You cursed rascal ! ’—‘ Cane faccia gialutto ! ’—‘ You yellow-faced dog ! ’ In the midst of this, the blood, thanks to the heat of the Archbishop’s hand, dissolved. They again threw themselves on their knees, and, tearing their hair (the old ladies particularly), with streaming eyes, cried, ‘ Oh ! most holy saint, forgive us this once, and never more will we doubt your goodness ! ’ Had I not been an eye-witness of this scene of gross superstition and ignorance, I really could not have given credit to it.”

Kelly, on August 31st, 1779, saw the interesting ceremony of La Festa del la Nouvena, which is now probably a thing of the past, or, at any rate, shorn of its once picturesque accessories. Then, the shepherds and peasantry from Abruzzo, Calabria, and Apulia, came down from their mountain homes clad in their sheepskin dresses, playing on the *zampogna* (a kind of bagpipe), and others on the *calassione*. The last-named instrument was then common in the Neapolitan dominions, and was something like a guitar, though it only had two strings. This band of musical shepherds visited all the churches and the houses of the leading noblemen, and played their famous “ Pastorale.” During the Christmas season they again appeared, and performed the pageantry of the Virgin and the birth of Christ. The sacred figures were as large as life, and often devolved as heirlooms in the families of the actors. On September 8th he witnessed the annual procession on that day, when the King and Queen, with all the

Court, attended by a large body of soldiers, crowds of monks, and the boys of the Conservatori, went to pay their respects to La Madonna del Piè di Grotto. All the balconies of the houses in the streets through which they passed were hung with tapestry, rich silk, satins, and the spectacle was magnificent and beautiful. As a pupil of Finaroli, who conducted at many of the high festivals and ceremonies of the churches of Naples, Kelly often sang at these services, being, as he puts it, " a *Christian* —i.e. a Roman Catholic " :

" I was delighted at this, not for the lucre of gain, although they pay their singers liberally, but because the nuns of the convents where the performances take place send round trays full of delicious sweetmeats, made by themselves. Such traits of female attention were gratifying to me at that period. The profession of a nun is a most magnificent and impressive sight. If the lady be of a noble and rich family, the luxury displayed on the occasion is excessive ; she is covered with diamonds, all of which, if she does not possess them herself, are borrowed or hired. Finaroli told me an anecdote so illustrative of the ridiculous punctilio and vanities which sometimes mix themselves with this solemn act, that I cannot forbear repeating it.

" The young and beautiful daughter of the Duke de Monteleone, the richest nobleman in Naples, was destined by her family to take the veil ; she consented without a murmur to quit the world, provided the ceremony of her profession was performed with splendour ; and a *sine qua non* was that Cafferelli, the great soprano singer, should perform at it. It was represented to her that he had retired with a fine fortune to his estate in the interior of Calabria, and had declared his determination never to sing again. Then, said the reasonable young lady, '*I* declare *my determination* never to take the veil unless he does. He sang six years ago, when my cousin was professed, and I had rather die than it should be said that she had the first singer in the world to sing for *her*, and that I had not.' The fair lady was firm, and her glorious obstinacy was such that her father was obliged to take a journey into Calabria, when, with much entreaty, and many very *weighty* arguments, he prevailed on Cafferelli to return with him to Naples. He sang a *salva regina* at the ceremony ; and the signora, having gained her point, cheerfully submitted to be led, like a lamb to the sacrifice, to eternal seclusion from the gay and wicked world. In justice to her taste, however, it must be said that Cafferelli was one of the greatest soprano singers Italy ever produced. He was a Neapolitan, and the Neapolitans were very proud of him. He amassed a great fortune, and purchased the Dukedom of Dorato for his nephew, and built a magnificent palace for himself, over the entrance to which was inscribed :

AMPHYON THEBAS
EGO DOMUM

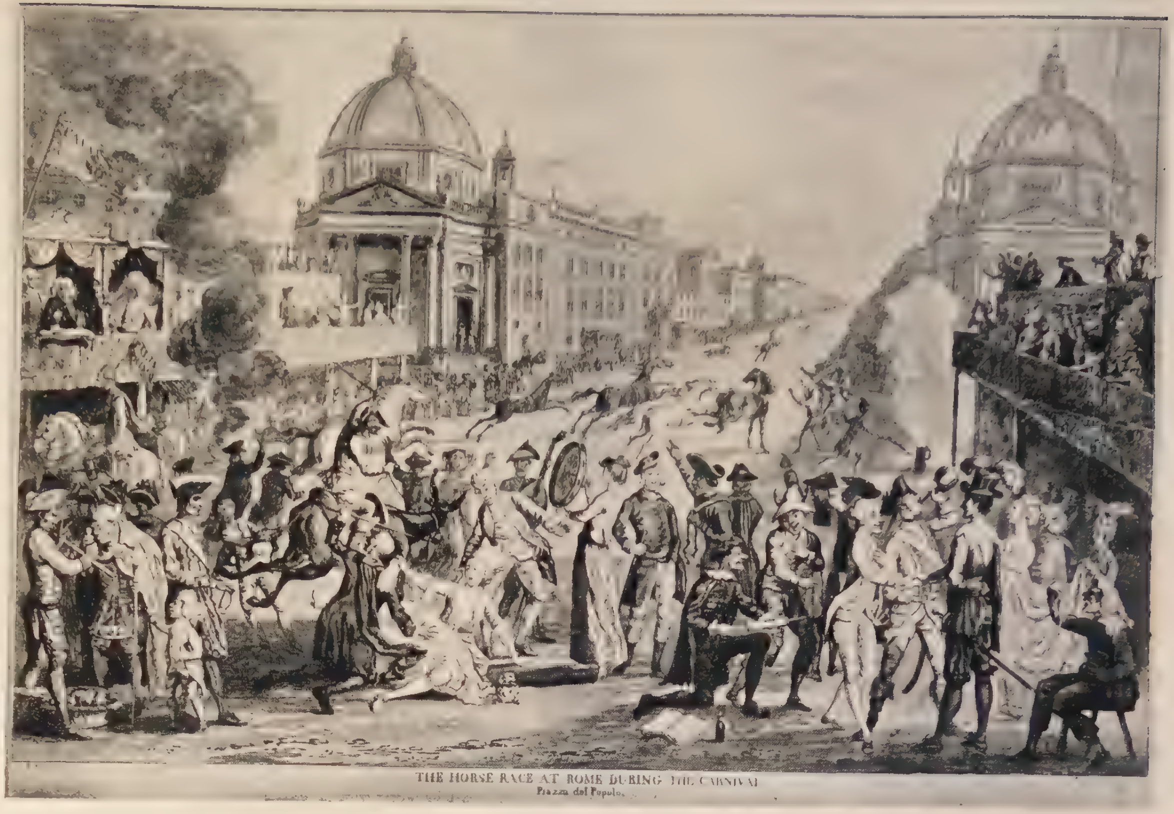
Michael Kelly had become acquainted with an English family named Stewart in Naples, and he was invited by Mr. Stewart to accompany them to Rome to see the carnival, free of all expense as to journey, board, and lodging. His excitement was, of course, great :

" I confess my heart beat with joy at the proposal. I flew to my master and the good Father Dolphin to obtain permission for the delightful journey, which was granted ; and a few zecchinos *on account* from the latter completed my happiness. My friend Fleming went with me to the Mole to get my Neapolitan ducats exchanged for Roman scudi, for near the Mole is the money market, where there were stalls, in which the owners sat with wooden bowls before them, filled with the coins of every nation in the world ; there, for a small premium, the traveller might obtain the current cash of the nation he was about to visit ; and this in many instances was more convenient than a letter of credit.

" On the following morning, December 26th (1779), with a heart as light as my pocket, I found myself seated in an excellent travelling-carriage, with the worthy Mr. Stewart, his amiable wife, and sister ; a courier before, and a Neapolitan carriage with the servants and luggage behind us : and, truth to say, I never felt more perfectly happy in the whole course of my existence. We passed the first night at Terracina, a dangerous place to sleep at during the summer months, as it is then rendered dreadfully unwholesome by what the Romans call the '*mal aria*.' All the inhabitants who have the means of doing so leave it during that period. We, however, escaped, and arrived in Rome the following evening, and drove to the Piazza di Spagna, where the English usually took up their abode. The Spanish Ambassador always resided there, and it was so completely his territory that he could grant protection even in cases of murder. Whether in compliment to the Spanish Embassy, or the English Society, I know not, but *unprejudiced ladies* were, in those days, not suffered to live in any other quarter of the city !

" The day after our arrival, we went to the Corso, where the sports of the carnival were going on. There was to be seen the whole population of Rome, high and low, rich and poor, *en masque* ; the nobility and ladies in their most splendid equipages all masqued, throwing sugar-plums to the motley group below, which was composed of mountebanks, pulcinellos, cardinals, harlequins, etc., with music, dancing, singing. In short, I was in a delirium of pleasure. Every evening we visited the theatres ; there were two for serious operas, the Altiberti and the Argentini, where the best performers are always found ; indeed, should the manager attempt to introduce anything inferior, woe be to him ; and, as these theatres are only allowed to be open during the carnival, he is obliged to pay enormous salaries to procure the first singers, for the Romans will have the best or none. There are also two theatres for comic operas, La Capranica and La Valle."

Kelly gives an amusing account of how seriously the Romans took their Italian Opera. The numerous abbés were the severest of the critics ; they would sit in the front of the pit, each bearing in one hand a lighted wax taper and in the other the score of the opera, and should an unfortunate singer make a mistake the critical clerics would call out, " Bravo, bestia "—" Bravo, you beast ! " The composer of the opera used to preside at the pianoforte during the first three performances of his work, and a bad time he often had of it. Should any passage of his opera strike the audience as similar to the melody of another composer, the cry would arise, " Bravo, il ladro "—" Bravo, you thief " ; or " Bravo, Paisiello ! bravo Sacchini ! "—if they considered the passage stolen from these masters—" The curse of God light on him who first put a pen into your hand to write music ! " Kelly actually heard this objurgation shouted at the celebrated


THE HORSE RACE AT ROME DURING THE CARNIVAL
Piazza del Popolo.

THE CARNIVAL OF 1780 AT ROME, AS WITNESSED BY MICHAEL KELLY

From an engraving of the picture by Paul Sandby, after the picture by David Allan, in the Victoria and Albert Museum

composer Gazzaniga, who was compelled to sit at his pianoforte in the Teatro del Altiberti until the unflattering hubbub had ceased. Even the great Cimarosa, composer of the delicious *Il Matrimonio Segreto*, and the idol of Rome, on one unlucky occasion at the Teatro del La Valle used a movement in his opera which reminded the audience of a theme from another of his operas which he had written for the previous carnival. An abbé started up and cried, " Bravo, Cimarosa ! you are welcome from Naples ; by your music of to-night it is clear you have neither left your trunk behind you, nor your old music ; you are an excellent cook in hashing up your old dishes." Kelly relates :

" Poggi, the most celebrated buffo singer of his day, always dreaded appearing before those stony-hearted critics ; however, tempted by a large sum, he accepted an engagement at the Teatro del La Valle. He arrived in Rome some weeks previous to his engagement, hoping to make friends and form a party in his favour ; he procured introductions to the most severe and scurrilous, and, thinking to find the way to their hearts through their mouths, gave them splendid dinners daily. One of them, an abbé, he selected from the rest as his bosom friend and confidant ; he fed, clothed, and supplied him with money, he confided to him his terrors at appearing before an audience so fastidious as the Romans. The abbé assured him that he had nothing to fear as *his* opinion was looked up to by the whole bench of critics, and when he approved none dare dissent. The awful night for poor Poggi at length arrived, his *fidus Achates* took his usual seat, in his little locked-up chair in the pit. It was agreed between them that he was to convey to Poggi by signs the feeling of the audience towards him ; if they approved, the abbé was to nod his head ; if the contrary, to shake it. When Poggi had sung his first song the abbé nodded and cried, ' Bravo ! bravissimo ! ' But in the second act Poggi became hoarse and imperfect, the audience gave a gentle hiss which disconcerted the affrighted singer and made him worse ; on this his *friend* became outrageous, and, standing up on his chair, after putting out his wax-light and closing his book, he looked Poggi in the face and exclaimed, ' Signor Poggi, I am the mouth of truth, and thus declare that you are decidedly the worst singer that ever appeared in Rome. I also declare that you ought to be hooted off the stage for your impudence, in imposing on my simple and credulous good-nature as you have done.' This produced roars of laughter, and poor Poggi retired, never to appear again, without even exclaiming, '*Et tu, Brute*,' which he might most appropriately have applied to his guardian crony.

"A circumstance something like this took place at the Teatro Argentini. A tenor singer of the name of Gabrielli, brother of the great female singer of that name, was engaged there. Before he had got through five bars of his first song the critics began to hiss and hoot, and very deservedly so, for he was execrable, saying, 'Get away, you cursed raven!' 'Get off, you goat!' On which he came forward and addressed the audience very mildly, 'You fancy you are mortifying me by hooting me; you are grossly deceived; on the contrary, I applaud your judgment, for I solemnly declare to you that I never appeared on any stage without receiving the same treatment, and sometimes much worse.' This appeal, though it produced a momentary laugh, could not procure a second appearance for the poor fellow."

These were exciting times for operatic singers, and sometimes they went in peril of their lives, as in the case of Pachierotti when he was singing at San Carlos in Metastasio's *La Didone Abbandonata*, composed by Schuster, who took Kelly to a rehearsal of the opera, "which was a crown and sceptre to me in those days." He goes on to say:

"The opera was received with enthusiasm, particularly the rondo, sung divinely by Pachierotti, 'Io ti lascio, e questo addio,' which was afterwards introduced in the musical entertainment of *The Flitch of Bacon*, with the English words, 'No, 'twas neither shape nor feature,' adapted to it by my worthy friend Shield.[1] *La Didone* drew crowded houses, but the rondo was the magnet; indeed, Pachierotti's singing it was supposed to have raised a violent flame in the bosom of La Marchesa Santa Marca, one of the most beautiful women of the Neapolitan Court. She was said to be of a very susceptible nature, and to have fallen desperately in love with the pious Æneas, which love he honestly returned; this, though very pleasant to the parties themselves, was by no means relished by a certain il Cavaliere Ruffo, who had been *cavaliere servente* to the Marchesa, but was fairly dismissed by the rondo. He did not choose to lose his mistress to that tune, and, meeting Pachierotti one evening on the Mole, the fashionable promenade of the Neapolitans, to taste the sea-breeze, he overwhelmed him with abuse and struck him. Pachierotti drew his sword, and, being as good a swordsman as a singer, soon wounded and disarmed il Cavaliere. He immediately reported the affair to the Minister, il Marchese Sambuco, who submitted the matter to the King. His Majesty was pleased to approve of Pachierotti's conduct, and it was hinted to il Cavaliere that, if he attempted further outrage, himself and family might find cause for repentance in the loss of their places at Court. This was decisive, and the affair dropped. But Pachierotti, who lived in perpetual fear of assassination, though engaged for two seasons, gave in his resignation on the score of ill-health at the end of the first, and, acting Æneas for the last time, left the fair Marchesa to play Didone at her leisure."

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[1] See later, p. 300.

Michael Kelly saw all the sights of Rome, the wonderful city, including the Cardinal York, grandson of King James II and styled by the Jacobites King Henry IX after the death of his brother, Prince Charles Edward Stuart. His Eminence was extremely charitable, particularly to any English who needed aid in Rome. Kelly tells an amusing story of an Irishman, named Patrick O'Flanagan, who had been wrecked at Genoa. He travelled on foot to Rome to seek the assistance of the benevolent Cardinal York, and persuaded the Prince's porter, who was a Scotchman, to present His Eminence with the following letter:

> "MAY IT PLEASE YOUR SANCTITY,
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> "I was cast on shore at Genoa—travelled on foot to Rome. Hearing of your Holiness's humanity to poor Irishmen—for thirteen years I served his Britannic Majesty, King George III, in the navy. God bless and prosper him to boot. I hate and detest the Pope and the Pretender, and I defy them and the Devil and all his works, and am,
>
> "Your Sanctity's obedient servant,
>
> "PAT O'FLANAGAN."

Patrick waited until the Cardinal drove out, when he threw himself on his knees; His Eminence, on learning his identity, laughed heartily at his elegant and logical epistle, and gave him twenty Roman crowns.

Michael Kelly returned to Naples, " where wit walks the streets and music fills the air," and to his master, Finaroli, who expressed the hope that his gay pupil would now attend to study. So for a time he attended at the Conservatorio in the mornings or at the festivals which were celebrated daily in the churches. In the evenings he was at the theatres or singing at some of the great houses to which he had been introduced by Sir William Hamilton. He says, at that time, to be a native of Great Britain was a *passe partout* all over Italy. Indeed, the name of Englishman was held in such reverence, that, if two Italians were making a bargain, it was clenched by one saying, " I pledge to do so and so on the honour of an Englishman." This was considered more binding than any oath they could swear. But Kelly was soon to be off again. One evening, when out with his friend, Blake, the two boys entered a billiard-room in the Strada di Toleda. In an apartment upstairs was the famous soprano singer, Aprile, who was regarded as the greatest vocalist of the time, for he was called by the Italians, " Il padre de tutti cantanti "—" The father of all singers." He was acquainted with Blake, who presented Kelly. Aprile invited both to take chocolate with him next morning, and, after hearing Kelly sing, he said : " This boy has both taste and expression, and I think so well of his abilities that, if his friends approve of it, I will take him with me to Palermo, and instruct him without any remuneration ; indeed, I have no doubt but that in a short time I can make him capable of earning his bread anywhere."

Before going to Sicily, Kelly accompanied Aprile on a visit to the singer's family in his native Abruzzo, when he was also to conduct a festival at Gaeta :

" The best professors in the kingdom were engaged, and I had the honour of singing a *salva regina*. The festival was most splendid, and, had Aprile been the greatest potentate on earth, he could not have been more caressed by his townsmen than he was. Gaeta is four days' journey from Naples, and, as we slept each night at a convent, I had a good opportunity of witnessing the luxurious mode in which the monks of Abruzzo lived. It beggars all description ; they and their convents are proverbially rich, and their country abounds in all good things, especially wines, which are indeed excellent. After the festival was over, and we had remained a week at Gaeta, we returned to Naples, not forgetting on our way back our nocturnal visits to the Holy Fathers, who repeated their hospitalities. On our return, I continued to attend Aprile, who gave me a lesson every day, and almost every day an invitation to dinner. He seemed much entertained by my boyish mimicry, a talent which I possessed at that time in no mean degree."

And, now the time had come to depart for Palermo, Kelly was sorry to say good-bye to his companions, Fleming, Blake, and Cobley,[1] a young man employed in a mercantile house at Naples. With Aprile, his brother, Giuseppe, and a valet, he embarked on a polacre, commanded by a Trapani Capitano, and, after a passage of three days, arrived at the shores of Sicily. Here he noticed a number of young men swimming and diving most expertly. They remained in the water for several hours, for at that date swimming formed an essential part of the education of Sicilian youth of all ranks, and was an acquirement of equal importance with reading and writing.

Kelly's master, Aprile, was fulfilling an operatic engagement at the theatre of Palermo, where had performed the celebrated Gabrielli, who was the most capricious of operatic stars. On one occasion when she was to appear in a new opera before the Viceroy and his Court, she sent word that she had a headache and would not perform. Expostulations were in vain, and, Sicily being a hot-blooded and swift country, she was arrested and put in prison. She said to the Captain of the Guard with great coolness, "Your Viceroy may make me cry, but he cannot make me sing." In prison she remained for two days, and made a *festa* for the other captives, for she feasted them sumptuously, and on her departure distributed a large sum of money among them. When

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[1] Kelly added in his *Reminiscences* that he met Cobley again, years later, in England, "at the house of his brother-in-law, Mr. Haydon, of Plymouth, when we talked of our youthful pranks and 'fought all our battles o'er again,' not forgetting the innumerable bowls of punch we had drunk on the Mole, at the house of the pretty widow MacMahon, who had one great attraction in my eyes, in addition to those of her person. She let me *score*, and I did 'score, and spared not,' and the consequence was that, being born with a natural genius for drinking punch, I got pretty deeply into her books: not into her bad books, however, for I paid her honourably before I left Naples."

La Gabrielli was performing at the theatre of San Carlos at Naples, and living in sin and great splendour with Count Kaunitz, the manager of the theatre at Palermo wrote to her to inquire her terms for a season in Sicily. She replied : " If you will build a bridge that will reach from Naples to Palermo, I will sing for you, not else." To which the manager replied : " Madame, if you can recollect, and will give me a list of ALL those on whom you have bestowed favours, in the course of your life, I will build the bridge you mention, not else." The diva liked this freedom of speech ; she went to Palermo, and in due course the engaging manager was added to the extensive list of her lovers, and, indeed, she ever after entertained a warm penchant for him.

Aprile's prima donna on the present occasion was La Signora Agatina Carara, one of the most beautiful women of her day, a fine singer, and who was " protected " by a committee of five noblemen : " With them she played her cards so cleverly that each supposed himself the favoured lover ; but in all these little delicate arrangements she had an able and experienced, if not very respectable, ally in her husband. He, worthy soul, had but one weakness : an inordinate love of gold, and the bearer of such arguments had everything to hope from the sweetness of his disposition. I never knew a man who could bow so gracefully, or quit a room with a better air, when a nobleman called upon his *cara sposa* : fortunately, he was fond of taking long walks, and never was known to return home at an unseasonable hour."

Kelly and his friends stayed at a house in the Strada del Cassaro, and he was soon made aware of the unpleasantness of the sirocco, when windows and doors were hermetically sealed and all visiting at an end. But with the return of the tramontane, or north wind, everything, in the words of modern slang, " in the garden was lovely." The ladies sallied forth, black-eyed and vivacious, wearing black veils after the Spanish fashion ; in the evening they followed the French and English modes and blazed with diamonds. " All ranks, however, are fond of ornament, the very poorest loading their throats with gold chains. In no country in the world are the women more fascinating. In their hospitality and liveliness of conversation, they reminded me of the ladies of old Ireland. But when they dance, their attitudes and movements are—what shall I say ?—inspiration itself. I soon began to find myself too susceptible to their winning ways, and my young heart resembled a target, in which almost every shot told. Every Sunday very religiously I paid a visit to the tomb of Santa Rosalia, the grotto on Mount Pellegrino, where these good Christians go, dressed 'in all their best,' to pay their respects to their sanctified protectress. I was astonished at not finding any female servants in Palermo ; and when I expressed my wonder, an Irish friend of mine accounted for the fact by stating that all the *maid*servants in that part of the world were *men*."

On July 12th, 1780, the natal day of Santa Rosalia, Kelly witnessed the national festival : " From Aprile's house, in the Strada del Cassaro, we had a fine view of the procession, which commenced at five in the evening, and passed from the Marina to the Porte Felice ; all the military in and about Palermo were assembled to protect it. Among them, on the present occasion, were a Swiss regiment and the Irish brigade, a fine set of men. The car on which the saint was carried was an enormous machine, drawn by forty mules, richly caparisoned, with twenty postilions in blue and silver ; near the bottom of the car was a large orchestra, the musicians placed in rows above each other, the whole interspersed with a precious assortment of angels, saints, artificial trees of coral, orange, lemon, and, surmounting all, on the dome of the car, and as high as the houses themselves, stood a large silver statue of the saint. The procession lasted till eight o'clock, when the illumination on the Marina commenced, the whole chain of which continued a mile in length. Imagination can picture nothing so splendid as the fireworks which were then displayed. On the sea stood an immense palace of fire, and all the shipping and galleys were brilliantly lighted up."

On the second day of the fête were horse races of an unusual kind. The horses, eight or ten in number, have no riders, but stand in a row, held by their fine manes by grooms ; they are almost covered with ribands of different colours. The grooms find it difficult to restrain them till the signal is fired from the Corso. At the sound of the cannon they start with the fleetness of the wind, and the sight is really beautiful. The conqueror is led back in triumph, and hailed with trumpets, kettle-drums, and the shouts of the populace, who vociferate, with all their might, " Viva il bel cavallo ! Viva mille anni " (" May the beautiful horse live a thousand years ! "). All this time the noble animal stalks majestically through the Corso, as if conscious of his triumph, and the applause bestowed upon him.

On the third evening there were more illuminations and much music in the Chiesa Grande, where four large orchestras were erected to contain the numerous performers, instrumental and vocal, under the direction of Aprile. It was now that Kelly made his first public professional appearance abroad, for he sang a motetto composed by Genario Mano. Aprile had taken great pains in the practice of the music ; he was fully satisfied with Kelly's execution, and, as the boy was the first and only native of Great Britain to sing at the Festival of Santa Rosalia, or, indeed, at any church in Sicily, April considered the event so remarkable that he had Michael Kelly's name and nationality inserted in the archives of the Chiesa Grande. Kelly's voice had just at this date broken, and it quickly developed into one of tenor timbre. He was now in his eighteenth year.

Amid all this musical work—for he was studying for six hours every day—Michael, as usual, found time for his social pleasures. Sir William Hamilton furnished Kelly with letters of introduction to the chief members of the Sicilian nobility—Prince Villa Franca, the Duke of Verdura, Prince Val Guarniera, and the Duke and Duchess San Michelli. The last-named Duke spoke English fluently, and was a great admirer of the works of Shakspere ; indeed, most of the Sicilian nobility studied English, and they had an " English Cassino," to which only those who understood the language were admitted.

Like their Neapolitan neighbours, the Sicilian nobles were addicted to the gamble of a faro bank after the musical part of their entertainment was over, concluding with supper, wherein fish predominated. " Their moreau, a species of eel, is delicious, and only to be procured in this part of the Mediterranean ; their tunny-fish and *pesce spada* (sword-fish) are very fine ; and their ices, which they serve up in all shapes, are exquisite, as well as their Malavisa wine, the produce of the Liparian Isles."

Prince Paterno, a man of wit and talent, was particularly kind to Michael ; and with Prince Peterpersia, Kelly went on a fortnight's trip to Catania, to the estates of the Prince's father, Prince Budero, attended by a bodyguard who looked like banditti. He also travelled with his host to the superb palace of Prince Biscaria, which was situated almost at the foot of Mount Etna. It is remarkable what attentions and hospitality were offered to the little singing-boy from Ireland. In the eighteenth century, of course, patronage of the arts, whether of painting, sculpture, acting, or music, was a predominant pleasure of the aristocracy ; and that is one reason why the path of Kelly and his artistic contemporaries was strewn with roses and softened with rare wines in the society of the greatest men and women of Italy, and, as will be seen later, of Austria and England.

When in Sicily, in the neighbourhood of La Bagaria, Kelly was taken to see the house of a certain Prince B——, whom he described as a sort of maniac, but who in these days would probably be classed with the Man with Red Hair of Mr. Hugh Walpole. On entering the hall, he saw the heads of beautiful women, and the bodies of the most frightful animals ; and the body of a man with the head of a mastiff. The family statues were all fancifully clad in suits of different coloured marble, with red stockings and black shoes. The roofs of the apartments were lined with looking-glass, so that if five or six persons were moving about a room, it appeared as if a hundred were walking on their heads. Each pane of glass in the windows was of a different colour, and even the clock in the hall was stuck into a giant's body. Yet the rooms themselves were beautiful, paved with fine marble, and containing a profusion of china, and objects of taste and virtu. The Prince's dressing-room was filled with figures of snakes, scorpions, and other disgusting animals ; in short, the Prince's whole life seemed devoted to the study of the horrible and disgusting.

At the theatre the precocious boy of seventeen met with his first adventure :

" Going to the parterre of the theatre one evening, on seeing an empty seat, I sat down. A very pretty woman sat next to me, with whom I entered into conversation. At the end of the first act of the opera, a young gentleman, who, I afterwards found, was the Marchese San Lucia, and the professed *cicisbeo* of the lady I was speaking to, came to me, and said, ‘ How dare you, you insolent fellow, place yourself in a seat that belongs to me ? ’ I answered truly that, had I known the seat to be his, I would not have taken it. His reply to this pacific speech was a thump on the head, which I repaid with interest. But in an instant, I was seized, and, for the heinous crime of returning a blow, was hurried to prison, and left there amongst culprits of every description. My *entrée* seemed to create a bustle amongst them, and I felt myself a personage of importance.

“ About a dozen of them messed together, and invited me to sup with them, and I can say, with justice, I never passed a more jolly night in my life. They had some good *pesce spada* for supper, and plenty of wine. They sang and told laughable stories. One of them had been a captain of Calabrian banditti, previous to which he had been the hero of the pickpockets on the Largo di Castello at Naples. He told us many of his exploits, and something of his education. When a boy, he had been placed at a school, where his trade was regularly taught. A large figure, made of straw, was placed in the middle of a room, about which were arranged watches, trinkets, pocket-handkerchiefs, etc. etc. The master of the school (and a very great master of arts he was) stood by and gave instructions. No one was allowed to be an adept, or fit to take the field, till he could rob the figure without being observed, or deranging a single straw.

“ I was detained in prison for three days, and was only liberated through great interest. I returned to my master, who received me with his usual kindness, and applauded my spirit for not receiving a blow without returning it. The termination of his engagement approached, when he proposed returning to Naples. He called me to him one morning, and after hearing me sing half a dozen songs, in which he had taken great pains in my instruction, said, ‘ The time of our separation is approaching ; your talent will now procure you an engagement in any theatre in Europe. I have written to Campigli, the manager of the Pergola Theatre in Florence [he was also a sort of agent, and was, at that time, in correspondence with, and furnished, every Italian Opera in Europe with singers, dancers, composers, etc.] : he will be glad to see you, and under his care and patronage you cannot fail of success ; because you have the peculiar distinction of being the only public scholar I ever taught. God bless you, my dear boy.' "

So little Kelly parted with grief from his great and kind master, and prepared to set out to seek his fortune. Before departing he presented his pianoforte, which he had brought from Ireland, to Aprile—" it was my only possession, but I declare that, had it been worth thousands, it would have been his ; my love and gratitude to him were so strong." Many years afterwards, on one occasion when Kelly was dining at Merton " with my dear and lamented friend, the late Lady Hamilton," Nelson, who was present, observed : " Mr. Kelly, when in Naples, I have frequently heard your old master, Aprile, speak of you with great affection, though he said that when with him you were wild as a colt. He mentioned also, your having given him your pianoforte, which, he said, nothing should induce him to part with."

Kelly says that Aprile was a man of the most honourable mind, and an excellent scholar. He inculcated a love of truth and a horror of committing a mean action, and instructed him in the beauties of Metastasio and the other great Italian poets.

Aprile gave Michael thirty Neapolitan ounces, and paid his passage to Leghorn in the Syracusan polacre, which took six days to accomplish the voyage, for hurricanes blew, Stromboli roared and poured forth volumes of flames, the while the polacre was pursued by a Turkish *galera*. The Sicilian crew were on their knees, praying to their patron saint for protection from the terrible Turk, and, the saint being in propitious mood, a breeze sprang up and carried the voyagers safely to Leghorn. When Kelly stepped off the boat, he was wearing a Sicilian capote, over which flowed his long fair hair. His complexion was also very fair, and his figure slight. On the quay were standing a young man and a young lady, and, as Kelly approached, he heard the girl say in English (she thinking he would not understand the language) : " Look at that girl dressed in boy's clothes." To her astonishment, Kelly called out in the same language : " You are mistaken, miss ; I am a very proper *he* animal, and quite at your service." All three laughed immoderately, and from that moment was formed a firm friendship which was to have important developments in the musical world of the coming years. For the boy and girl were brother and sister, Stephen and Nancy Storace, he[1] destined to be one of the leading composers of his time, and ranked with Mozart and Purcell, and she[2] a celebrated singer, already at that date, though only fourteen years old, the prima donna of the Comic Opera at Leghorn.

The Storaces' name before they put the "t" into it was Sorace; their father, a double bass player at the Opera House in London, was a Neapolitan by birth, but he married one of the Misses Trusler, of Bath, ladies famed for their skill in cake and tart making, and sisters of the eccentric Dr. Trusler. The fathers, Trusler and Storace, together with Dr. Samuel Arnold and Thomas Lowe, were interested in the management of Marylebone Gardens during the sixth decade of the eighteenth century, when the performance of burlettas and light operas was supplemented by the delicious cakes of Miss Trusler. In May, 1760, the advertisements of Mary-le-bone Gardens announced that Trusler's daughter (Mrs. Storace?) "begs leave to inform the nobility and gentry that she intends to make fruit-tarts during the fruit season; and hopes to give equal satisfaction as with the rich cakes and almond cheese-cakes. The fruit will always be fresh gathered, having great quantities in the garden; and none but loaf sugar used, and the finest Epping butter. Tarts of a twelvepenny size will be made every day from one to three o'clock. New and rich seed and plum cakes are sent to any part of the town." When Sheridan married Elizabeth Linley, of Bath, in 1773, and brought her to London, they naturally went to lodge at the house of her former fellow-townswoman, Trusler (now Mrs. Storace) in Boyle Street, Marylebone, and from that time the Sheridans and Linleys were interested in the musical abilities of the gifted Storace children. Nancy could play and sing at sight when eight years old, and of Stephen, Kelly relates: "He was the most gifted creature I ever met with, an enthusiast and a genius. But in music and painting he was positively occult. I have often heard Mr. Sheridan say, that if he had been bred to the law, he thought he would have been Lord Chancellor."

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[1] Stephen Storace (1763–96) became composer to Drury Lane Theatre in 1787. His operas, *The Haunted Tower*, 1789, *The Pirates*, 1792, and *The Iron Chest*, 1796, were very excellent.

[2] Anna Storace (1766–1817), like Kelly, was a pupil of Rauzzini. She had her first great success at Florence in 1780, and sung at La Scala, Milan, in 1782. She returned to London in 1787. She married John Abraham Fisher (1744–1806), the violinist, who was expelled from Austria for ill-treatment of his wife. Nancy Storace, of course, separated from him, and she formed an association with John Braham, singing with him all over the continent, 1797–1801, and later at Covent Garden and Drury Lane, in London. She retired in 1808. As will be seen presently, Nancy Storace was the original Susanna in Mozart's *Nozze di Figaro* in 1784.

Stephen Storace was not more than seventeen that day when he and Michael Kelly first met on the Mole of Leghorn, but he and his sister already had power in the world of music; and, after their quaintly found new friend had dined with them that same evening, they inquired into his prospects, and proposed a concert, for which they secured the assistance of the opera singers for nothing, and introduced Kelly to the British Consul; to influential Scotch families, the Grants and Frasers, resident in Leghorn; and also to two brothers named Darby, brothers of Mrs. Robinson—Perdita, the actress who at this moment held the affections of the youthful Prince of Wales. All these people patronised the concert, and Michael had eighty zecchinos in his pocket—representing nearly £40 in English money—when he set out for Lucca. Before leaving, there had been Stephen Storace's benefit, which was attended by the officers and crew of the privateer *Fame* from Dublin. They marched to the theatre and filled the parterre. At the end of the opera, Storace sang the Irish ballad, "Molly Asthore," on the conclusion of which the boatswain blew his whistle shrilly and the crew rose *en masse* and gave three loud cheers, to the consternation of the Italians. The Irish sailors then sang "God save the King" in full chorus, and applauded themselves vociferously, to the extreme alarm of the Italian section of the audience.

From Lucca, Kelly proceeded to Pisa, where he had a letter of introduction to Viganoni, the tenor, who took him to see the Festival of the Battle of the Bridge, as it was called, when two parties of citizens, armed *cap-à-pie*, representing respectively the armies of St. John the Baptist and St. Antonio, meet to dispute the passage of the bridge across the Arno, and fight until one side or the other is defeated. "The battle is real, and contested with the most inveterate obstinacy, many of the combatants being desperately wounded, and sometimes killed."

At Pisa, too, Kelly saw the curious survival from ancient times of a galley-slave, with shaved head, sweeping the baths. After this most laborious work all day, the unfortunate man at night was chained on board a Tuscan galley which lay in the Arno. The slave, Giuseppe Afrissa, had been a well-known courtier in Vienna, and Master of the Revels to the Emperor Francis I and his wife, Maria Theresa, at their Palace of Schoenbrunn. He was banished from Court for some criminal offence, and returned to Turin, his native place. At length Afrissa was arrested at Pisa on a charge of forgery, tried, and condemned to hard labour as a galley-slave for life. A somewhat similar punishment for forgery came under Kelly's personal observation a little later in Vienna. He was well acquainted with a young Prince P——, whose father had been Governor of Gratz. The young man, who was twenty-five, though accomplished and charming, was wild and dissipated. He was eventually arrested for forgery, when driving with Kelly, who shortly after witnessed the punishment to which his friend had been condemned. " Often, as I have been walking, I have met this unfortunate man, with his head shaved, wearing a paper cap, and a jacket of coarse cloth, chained, with a large log tied to his leg, and a broom in his hand, actually sweeping the cross-ways with other felons. These unfortunate wretches, after they have swept the streets for a limited period as an example, are chained in couples and compelled to drag barges on the Danube." Forgery was, of course, a capital offence in England at this date. Every effort was made to save the young Prince mentioned by Kelly. A near relative, Princess Liechtenstein, though very ill, threw herself on her knees before the Emperor to beg for his pardon. But Francis I was inflexible, and said that if he had a son guilty of the same heinous crime, he should suffer the same punishment.

On arriving at Florence, Kelly presented his letter from Aprile to Campigli, a wealthy personage who combined the businesses of jeweller and broker with that of theatrical agent, and found that he had arrived exactly at the right time, for there was an engagement vacant for first comic tenor at the Teatro Nuova, which Kelly accepted at a payment of £23 for the season of ten weeks. He obtained food and lodgings pleasantly cheap. At an hotel kept by an Englishman he secured a good bedroom and board for three shillings a day, and later, at a boarding-house for theatrical people, run by Cechi, the stage-manager, he had a good bedroom, the use of a large drawing-room in common with the other boarders, with breakfast, dinner, coffee, supper, and as much wine of the country as he chose to drink each day, for £1. 15*s*. per month !

Kelly also had a letter of introduction to Lord Cowper, before mentioned,[1] who received him with great kindness, for " he spent his princely fortune with the greatest liberality, patronising the arts and artists nobly, and, indeed, had more influence in Florence than the Grand Duke himself." The boy was invited to dinner, where he met Sir Horace Mann (1701–86), the ancient British Minister in Florence and correspondent of Horace Walpole, and Robert Merry (1755–98), the dilettante and Della Cruscan.[2] In the evening Lady Cowper gave a concert, when the great and now aged violinist, Nardini, played the " Devil's Sonata," composed by his master, Tartini. In reply to a question, Nardini related that he had frequently heard Tartini describe the circumstances which preceded the composition of this piece of music. He said that one night he dreamed that he had entered into a contract with the Devil, in fulfilment of which Diabolos was bound to perform all his commands. He placed his violin in the infernal hands, and asked him to play ; and the Devil played a sonata so exquisite that in the delirium of applause he was bestowing on the diabolical virtuoso he awoke, and rushed to his instrument in the endeavour to retain some of the exquisite strains that had been wafted from Hell : but in vain ; they had fled. Yet the sonata haunted his imagination by day and by night, and Tartini endeavoured to compose one in imitation, which was this " Devil's Sonata " ; but it was far inferior to the melodies of his dream, and he was so disappointed that he was disposed to abandon the profession of music.[3]

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[1] See *ante*, pp. 34–35.

[2] Robert Merry in later life married Elizabeth Brunton, the actress, and sister of the Countess of Craven.

[3] Giuseppe Tartini (1692–1770), before becoming celebrated as a musician, had many adventures as a law student. He fought duels, and married the niece of a cardinal, whose consent he had not asked, and, to escape the resentment of His Eminence, Tartini took refuge in a monastery for two years. Tartini was skilled in the principles of harmony in music and was one of the discoverers of the Grave Harmonics or third sounds. He died at Padua. His style as a violinist founded a school of players, among whom were Nardini, Pugnani, Viotti, and Baillot. The story of Tartini and the " Devil's Sonata " has also been told by Dr. Burney.

The opera in which Kelly made his appearance at Florence was *Il Francese in Italia*, he playing the part of the Frenchman. The prima donna was Lortinella, known as the Beautiful Ortabella ; indeed, Kelly says he never saw anything more lovely than she was. The primo buffo was Morigi, who had been very popular in London as the German soldier in Piccini's *La Buona Figliola.* He was renowned for his song, " Paterno Giudizio," which he never sang without applause, for if the audience failed to give him his due, he would go off the stage clapping his hands loudly, and crying out, " Well, if they want taste, I do not."

Kelly, who was not more than seventeen, made a successful début, and was encored in two of his songs and a duet, though he modestly attributed his flattering reception mainly to his extreme youth and the kind efforts of Lord and Lady Cowper and the other English people who were in Florence. He was also honoured by the presence, if not the attention, of Prince Charles Edward Stuart (King Charles III), who was at this date nearly sixty years of age, when disappointed hopes had led him to drowning his sorrows in excess of wine, and but little traces remained of the once dashing Young Chevalier. Kelly says that the Prince entered his box before the opera commenced :

" He was at that time very old and infirm, yet there appeared the remains of a very handsome man. He was very tall, but stooped considerably, and was usually supported by two of his suite, between whom he hobbled ; in this state he visited one of the theatres every night (he had a box in each) ; in a few minutes after he was seated, he fell asleep, and continued to slumber during the whole performance. The Italians always called him the King of England, and he had the Arms of England over the gates of his palace (the Palazzo Guadagni, in the street of San Sebastiano), and all his servants wore the Royal Livery."

The report of Kelly's success reached England, and, at the instigation of the friend he made at Leghorn, Stephen Storace, he received an offer from Thomas Linley (Sheridan's father-in-law) to act as first singer at Drury Lane for five years ; but for the present the project fell through, owing to the prohibition of Kelly's father, who threatened legal action, his son being under age. The paternal opposition seems to have been fatuous and unreasonable, but it was ineffective in Italy, and young Michael accepted Campigli's offer for an engagement at the Teatro San Moise, Venice, after the conclusion of the season in Florence. Before this new departure, he enjoyed the pleasures of Florence, and was much in the society of Lord Cowper, Sir Horace Mann, the young Polish Prince Poniatowski, and a Mr. Faulkner,[1] who gave sumptuous entertainments to the Florentines and English. Giuarduci, the famous male soprano, also paid him much attention, and gave Kelly some lessons in singing at his villa at Montefiascone, where there were lovely views of the Viterbo Hills, and a famous vineyard producing exquisite wines, of which the boy showed his approval by copious libations, thereby setting the standard for his future status as a connoisseur of fine wine—"Composer of wine and importer of music," as Sheridan was to style him in the years to come. The youthful Kelly was in no way deterred in his taste for wine by an epitaph he saw on a tomb in the cathedral at Siena : " Wine gives life : it was death to me. I never beheld the morning sun with sober eyes ; even my bones are thirsty. Stranger ! sprinkle my grave with wine ; empty the cup, and depart." Edward FitzGerald must certainly have heard of this Sienese inscription ere he penned his lines for *Omar Khayyâm* :

And much as wine has played the Infidel,
And robbed me of my Robe of Honour—well,
I often wonder what the vintners buy
One half so precious as the Goods they sell. . . .
Where I made one—turn down an empty glass.

Kelly relates that at the period he knew Florence, the favourite resort of the nobility was the Cassano Wood—a sort of Hyde Park—where they took the air in their splendid carriages. Here he saw Il Commendatore Pazzi, a man of immense wealth, driving his phaeton with six cream-coloured horses, which he managed with great skill. At Forligani, some twenty-five miles from Florence, Michael witnessed the curious festival of Santa

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[1] Possibly William Fawkener (eldest son of Sir Everard Fawkener, Kt.), who became British Envoy at Florence in 1787, and at St. Petersburg in 1790. He was at one time Clerk to the Privy Council.

Massina, when about seventeen thousand of the peasantry re-enacted the story of David and Goliath. They represented the two armies of the Philistines and the Israelites, with kings, princes, and attendants, dressed in magnificent garments, and heralded by bands playing on ancient martial instruments. The story was then acted—David's acceptance of the challenge, his attack with the stone in the sling, and the cutting off of his adversary's head—all in excellent pantomime. After the rout of the Philistines, the Israelites placed David in a triumphal car, and his prisoners followed the procession of victors amid the clang of warrior music and the shouts of thousands of people.

Departing at length from Florence, Kelly arranged with a *vetturino* with three mules to convey him to Bologna over the sublime Apennines, with their romantic prospects, wild ravines, and tree-clad heights. On the first night, in keeping with the subsequent conceptions of Mrs. Radcliffe, he slept at a lonely convent situated on the mountain-side, where a warm welcome and a good supper were extended to the singing-boy. The *vetturino* was a convivialist, and not quite so acceptable to the monks, but he, too, was a vocalist, and sang the beautiful verses of Tasso and Ariosto—even up to the gates of Bologna. Here Kelly lodged with Passerini, a hairdresser, father of the musician of the same name who had been one of Michael's early instructors in Dublin. Once again he found his boarding cheap: a good first floor, three meals a day, and as much wine as he wanted, for £1. 8*s.* a month. Passerini's shop was the rendezvous of literary and theatrical people, and here Kelly met the vocalists Lovatini and Trebi. At Bologna, he saw the Pope, Pius VI[1]:

"One morning, sitting very quietly in my dressing-gown in the shop, to have my hair dressed, I suddenly heard 'The Pope! the Pope!' cried out from every quarter. His Holiness had arrived the day before from Rome, and was now on his way to visit Cardinal Buona Compagnia. Regardless of my appearance, my hair half-dressed, my face covered with powder, my dressing-gown the same and flying open, I rushed out of the shop, and ran after the carriage of his Holiness, even to the very gates of the Cardinal's palace. I was not a little flattered at seeing how completely I divided public attention with his Holiness. Fancying myself to be ' a marvellous proper man,' I placed this to the score of my personal attractions ; but certain symptoms of laughter, which ended in roars, referred me to my dressing-gown for an explanation, and I retired at full speed, laughing, too, I confess, although rather mortified to find that I had given more entertainment than I received."

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[1] Pius VI, who occupied the Papal office for twenty-four years (1774–99), was the most travelled of the Popes. For several centuries no Pope had left Italy, but Pius VI went to Vienna in 1782. The early part of his reign was brilliant and prosperous, and he did much for art and Rome. But he was overwhelmed by the storms of the French Revolution and the subsequent wars. In 1798 the French general, Berthier, entered Rome and proclaimed a republic. The aged pontiff was arrested, and eventually conveyed to Valence. He was compelled to cross the Alps in a litter when the mountains were covered with deep snow. He died in the following year, an exile: his body was removed to Rome in 1802.

At Bologna, Kelly saw the Specola Museum, with its wax-works made by a woman, a native of the town, and the church of La Madonna della Santa Lucia on the hill, where was a covered way nearly six miles in length for the protection of the life-size figure of the Madonna when she was carried out in procession. Kelly found that the prima donna, Signora Palmini, who was to sing with him at Venice, was in Bologna, so they arranged to travel thither together. The lady, after the manner of her kind, was large. She was attended by her husband, a diminutive and jealous old man ; her ugly old mother ; a tiring servant ; a little negro page-boy ; and a lap-dog—the customary accessories to a woman with means in those days, from a duchess to something less, as can be seen in the second plate of *The Harlot's Progress* of Hogarth. The curious party set forth in a canal boat drawn by horses, and, after difficulties in getting through the locks, arrived at Ferrara, a quiet city, where the grass grew in some of the streets and most of the inhabitants wore the long swords which they still called " Andrea Ferraras." The merry landlord of the Hotel San Marc told an amusing story about the " mad " poet Ariosto.

Ariosto, one day passing a potter's shop in Ferrara, heard the owner singing a stanza of the *Orlando Furioso*. Attracted by his own poetry, he listened, and found that the potter mangled it most miserably, rendering a most beautiful passage rank nonsense. This so enraged the poet, that, having a stick in his hand, he laid about him lustily, and broke everything he could reach. When the poor devil of a potter expostulated with him for destroying the property of a man who had never done him any injury, he replied, " Tis false, you have done me the deepest injury; you have murdered my verses—I have caught you in the very act." When pressed to pay the poor man for some of his destroyed property, his only answer was, " Let him learn to sing my poetry, and I will then leave alone his pottery."

From La Ponte del Lago Scuro, Kelly and his friends again embarked in a barge, and proceeded along the Po to Venice, having on board a merry company of friars, Jews, singers, dancers, all mirth and jollity. A good dinner and supper were provided on the boat, and then all enjoyed themselves with dancing and singing. On reaching Venice, Kelly's party went to the Queen of England Hotel. Soon the dire intelligence came that the manager of the theatre where they were engaged to appear had absconded for lack of money to carry out his obligations. Signora Palmini and her entourage decided to return to Bologna as a more likely place to secure another operatic engagement, while poor little Kelly was left alone in Venice, without employment and almost penniless. But he was young and sanguine, with a zest for adventure and a gift for making friends. On the boat from Ferrara he had become acquainted with a young man named Lampieri, who was *en route* to Trieste, and he procured him cheap lodgings and introduced him to some of the theatrical people of Venice, including Michael de l'Agato, manager of San Benedetto, the chief opera house, for the Fenice was not then built. So, until remittances arrived from his father, and another engagement was found, Michael Kelly gave himself up to the delights of seeing Venice in the company of Lampieri. And the Venice he saw was the city in its brave days of love and laughter and song, with all its wealth of picturesque costume and the modes of the eighteenth century, the Venice that Casanova had known and depicted but twenty-five years earlier.[1] Well might Kelly write in after-days:

" Venice! dear, beautiful Venice! scene of harmony and love! where all was gaiety and mirth, revelry and pleasure, with what warm feelings do I recall thee to memory; day and night were the gondoliers singing barcarolles, or the verses of Tasso and Ariosto to Venetian airs ; barges full of musicians on the Grand Canale, serenading their enamoratas ; the Piazza of San Marc brilliantly lighted up ; ten thousand masks and ballad singers ; the coffee-houses filled with beautiful women, with their *cicisbeos*, or, if alone, unmolested, taking their refreshments and enjoying themselves without restraint. Venice was the paradise of women, and the Venetian women worthy of a paradise at least of Mahomet's. They were perfect houri ; and the Venetian dialect spoken by a lovely woman is the softest and most delicious music in the world to him whom she favours. In short, a Venetian woman, in her *zingale* dress well answers young Mirabel's description in the play of *The Inconstant*, ' Give me the plump Venetian, who smiles upon me like the glowing sun, and meets my lips like sparkling wine ; her person shining like the glass, her spirit like the foaming liquor.' Venice! dear, beautiful Venice ! . . . thy noble palaces ! thy magnificent churches, with their cloud-capt spires, appearing as if just arisen from the sea and floating on its surface. Years and years have passed away, yet I still call thee dear, beautiful Venice."

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[1] Casanova was, in fact, again in Venice during the years that Kelly lived there. Casanova was permitted by the State Inquisitors to return to Venice in September, 1774. He left it, for ever, in 1783. He died in 1798.

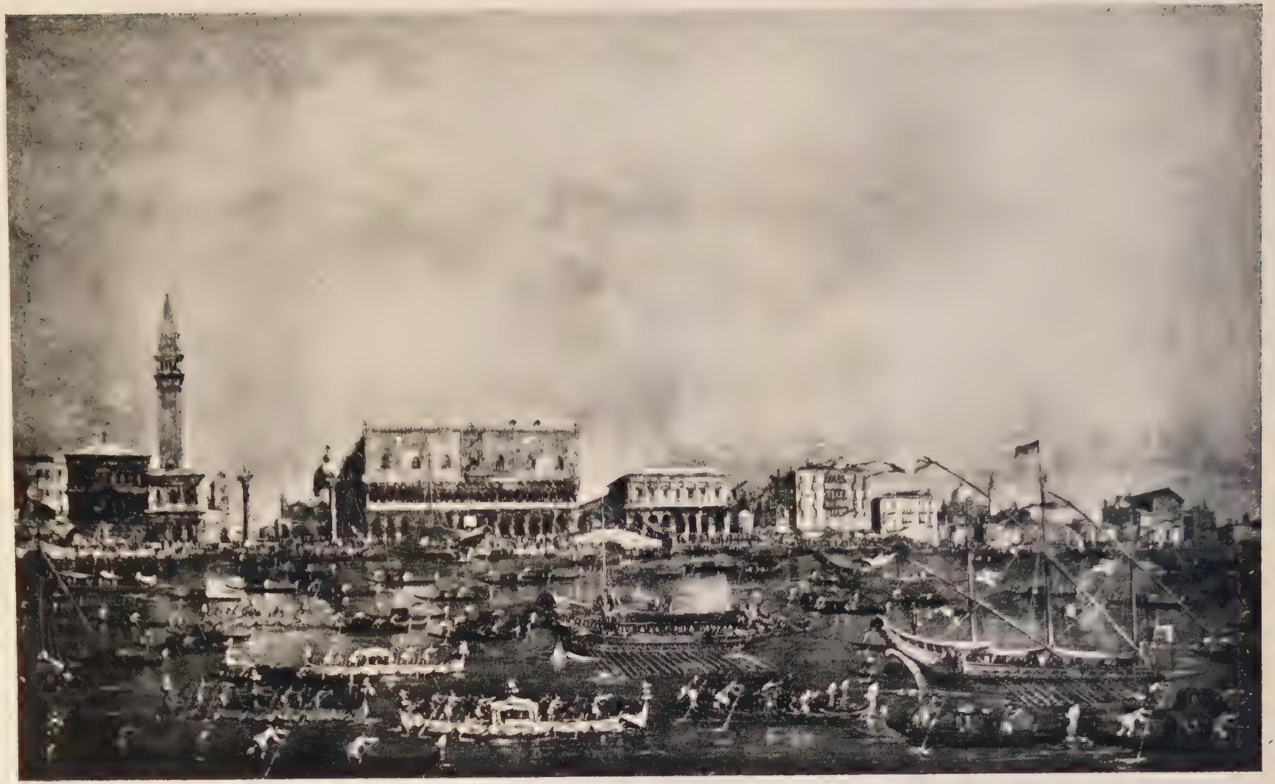
He found the Rialto the favourite lounge, crowded with shops and merchants of all countries—Christians, Turks, Armenians and Jews. The Jews were kept under strict surveillance. They were obliged to wear a piece of red cloth in the hat, by way of identification ; to live in a particular quarter called La Giudica ; and, under heavy penalty, to be in their houses before sunset.

Although Venice was at the zenith of its gaiety when Kelly knew it, the terrors of the Inquisition still survived. In illustration of this, Agato, the manager of San Benedetto, told him an impressive story :

" In this city you will find innumerable pleasures ; your youth and good spirits will lay you open to many temptations ; but against one thing, and one thing only, I particularly caution you : never utter one word against the laws or customs of Venice—do not suffer yourself to be betrayed even into a jest on this subject. You never know to whom you speak ; in every corner spies are lurking, numbers of whom are employed at a high price to ensnare the unwary, and report the language of strangers ; but, with no other protection than a silent tongue you may do what you like, and enjoy everything without moderation. I will relate an anecdote, which will give you some idea of our police.

"A countryman of yours came to this city, accompanied by a Swiss valet; he took up his residence at the Scuda di Francia. On his return home one evening, he found his writing-desk broken open, and a large sum of money taken from it. After making peaceable inquiries, without effect, he flew into a violent rage, charged the landlord and waiters, etc., with being thieves; but, above all, he called them Venetian thieves, and cursed himself for having come into a country where the property of a traveller was not safe even in his own hotel. In the height of his wrath he dismissed his valet for going out and leaving the door of his apartment unlocked; and, having thus vented his displeasure, thought the matter ended; but not so. On the third morning after this event, he was roused out of his sleep by the officers of the Inquisition, who informed him that he must go immediately before the three grand inquisitors. His feelings were not to be envied when, hoodwinked, he was led on board a gondola, and thence into a room hung with black, where sat his judges. After due preparation and solemnity, and a severe lecture on the enormity of the abuse which he had uttered against the Venetian State, its laws, and subjects, he received a peremptory order to quit its territories in twenty-four hours; this he, of course, tremblingly promised to obey; but, just as he turned to leave the tribunal, a curtain was suddenly drawn aside, behind which lay the strangled corpse of his Swiss valet, and the stolen bag of money by his side."

Kelly was present at the great festivals of Venice. In Passion Week the Doge went in procession to San Marc's, where there were six orchestras, and High Mass celebrated. The Fair of the Ascension lasted for fifteen days, and on the Day of the Ascension the Doge went in grand procession to marry the sea. The Doge left Venice in a beautiful *bucentaur*, superbly adorned, and rowed by twenty-one oarsmen on each side, and containing near three hundred persons, together with several bands of music. On reaching a certain point, the Doge threw a plain gold ring into the sea, saying, "We marry thee, O sea! in sign of true and perpetual dominion." The procession then returned to



THE FÊTE OF THE BUCENTAUR—THE DOGE OF VENICE WEDDING THE ADRIATIC,
AS WITNESSED BY KELLY IN 1781

Reproduced from Mr. George A. Simonson's monograph on "Francesco Guardi," published by Messrs. Methuen & Co.

Venice, the sea covered with gondolas, barges, and boats, and the spectators rending the air with acclamations. On one occasion, the celebrated and "wicked" Lord Lyttelton, with several English friends, witnessed this spectacle from a barge. They had on board a lacquey, a talkative fellow, prone to explain everything that was going on. This voluntary cicerone was standing up in the barge, and leaning over the side, at the moment that the Doge dropped the ring into the sea ; whereupon the loquacious valet bawled out with all his might and power of lung : "Now, my lord, look, look, the Doge has married the sea." "Has he," replied Lord Lyttelton, "then go you, you noisy dog, and pay the bride a visit," at the same time giving the unfortunate orator a push which precipitated the prater into the sea. He was taken up immediately, and, beyond a ducking, received no injury, and for that he was well repaid in coin.

Kelly found Venice better lighted than any foreign city he had seen ; the shops were kept open until midnight, emitting a blaze of light ; the taverns were open nearly all night, and supper could be procured at any late hour. He mentions that the Venetian ladies paid their own accounts for meals taken in public places, a custom which most people would say had its origin in the twentieth century :

"It is quite common for ladies and gentlemen . . . to form different parties, and adjourn to the taverns for supper. I have often been at these delightful parties. The ladies particularly are fond of these banquets, where good humour, mirth, and pleasantry abound : but they make it a rule, which they never in any instance deviate from, to pay their share of the bill ; nor will they allow their *cicisbeos* or relations to pay for them. Nothing would offend a Venetian lady more than any man of the party offering to pay for her upon one of their sociable excursions."

When Lampieri at length had to depart for Trieste, Kelly's money was almost exhausted. Before a supply arrived from home, he was reduced to two zecchinos—roughly something less than a pound. In this strait, and in need of a dinner, he bethought of a letter of introduction he had to a certain Signor Andrioli. The quaint experience that followed must be told in his own words :

"In the morning, I went to the Rialto coffee-house, to which

I was directed by the address of the letter. Here I found the gentleman who was the object of my search ; after reading my credentials very graciously, he smiled, and requested me to take a turn with him in the Piazza San Marc. He was a fine-looking man, of about sixty years old. I remarked there was an aristocratic manner about him, and he wore a very large tie-wig, well powdered, with an immense long tail. He addressed me with a benevolent and patronising air, and told me that he should be delighted to be of service to me, and bade me from that moment consider myself under his protection. ' A little business,' said he, ' calls me away at this moment, but, if you will meet me here at two o'clock we will adjourn to my *cassino*, where, if you can dine on one dish, you will perhaps do me the favour to partake of a boiled capon and rice. I can only offer you that ; perhaps a rice soup, for which my cook is famous ; and, it may be, just one or two little things not worth mentioning.'

" A boiled capon—rice soup—other little things, thought I—manna in the wilderness ! I strolled about, not to get an appetite, for that was ready, but to kill time. My excellent, hospitable, long-tailed friend was punctual to the moment ; I joined him, and proceeded towards his residence.

" As we were bending our steps thither, we happened to pass a *luganigera's* (a ham-shop), where there was some ham ready dressed in the window. My powdered patron paused—it was an awful pause ; he reconnoitred, examined, and at last said, ' Do you know, signor, I was thinking that some of that ham would eat deliciously with our capon. I am known in this neighbourhood, and it would not do for me to be seen buying ham—but do you go in, my child, and get two or three pounds of it, and I will walk on, and wait for you.'

" I went in of course, and purchased three pounds of the ham, to pay for which I was obliged to change one of my two zecchinos. I carefully folded up the precious viand, and rejoined my excellent patron, who eyed the relishing slices with the air of a gourmand : indeed, he was somewhat diffuse in his own dispraise for not having recollected to order his servant to get some before he left home. During this peripatetic lecture on gastronomy, we happened to pass a *cantina* ; in plain English—a wine-cellar. At the door he made another full stop.

" ' In that house,' said he, ' they sell the best Cyprus wine in Venice,—peculiar wine—a sort of wine not to be had anywhere else ; I should like you to taste it ; but I do not like to be seen buying wine by retail to carry home ; go in yourself, buy a couple of flasks, and bring them to my *cassino*, nobody hereabouts knows you, and it won't signify in the least.'

" This last request was quite appalling ; my pocket groaned to its very centre : however, recollecting that I was in the high road to preferment, and that a patron, cost what he might, was still a patron, I made the plunge, and, issuing from the *cantina*, set forward for my venerable friend's *cassino*, with three pounds of ham in my pocket, and a flask of wine under each arm, *sans six sous et sans souci !*

" I continued walking with my excellent and long-tailed patron, expecting every moment to see an elegant, agreeable residence, smiling in all the beauties of nature and art ; when, at last, in a dirty miserable lane, at the door of a tall dingy-looking house, my Mæcenas stopped, indicated that we had reached our journey's end, and, marshalling me the way that I should go, began to mount three flights of sickening stairs, at the top of which I found his *cassino*—it was a little *cas*, and a deuce of a place to boot—in plain English, it was a garret. The door was opened by a wretched old miscreant, who acted as cook, and whose drapery, to use a gastronomical simile, was ' done to rags.'

" Upon a rickety apology for a table was placed a tattered cloth, which once had been white ; and two plates ; and presently in came a large bowl of boiled rice.

" ' Where's the capon ? ' said my patron to his man.

" ' Capon ! ' echoed the ghost of a servant—' the—— ? '

" ' Has not the rascal sent it ? ' cried the master.

" ' Rascal ! ' repeated the man, apparently terrified.

" ' I knew he would not,' exclaimed my patron, with an air of exultation for which I saw no cause. ' Well, well, never mind, put down the ham and the wine, with those and the rice, I dare say, young gentleman, you will be able to make it out. I ought to apologise—but, in fact, it is all your own fault that there is not more ; if I had fallen in with you earlier, we should have had a better dinner.'

"I confess I was surprised, disappointed, and amused; but, as matters stood, there was no use in complaining, and accordingly we fell to, neither of us wanting the best of all sauces—appetite.

"I soon perceived that my promised patron had baited his trap with a fowl to catch a fool; but as we ate and drunk all care vanished, and, rogue as I suspected him to be, my long-tailed friend was a clever, witty fellow, and, besides telling me a number of anecdotes, gave me some very good advice; amongst other things to be avoided, he cautioned me against numbers of people who, in Venice, lived only by duping the unwary. I thought this counsel came very ill from him. 'Above all,' said he, 'keep up your spirits, and recollect the Venetian proverb, Cento anni di malinconia non pagerà un soldo de' debiti. A hundred years of melancholy will not pay one farthing of debt.'

"After we had regaled ourselves upon my ham and wine, we separated; he desired me to meet him the following morning at the coffee-house, and told me he would give me a ticket for the private theatre of Count Pepoli, where I should see a comedy admirably acted by amateurs; and, in justice to my long-tailed friend, I must say he was punctual, and gave me the ticket, which, however, differed from a boiled capon in one respect—he got it gratis."

At this theatre, Kelly met Signora Benini, a beautiful woman who was one of the leading singers in Italy at that time, and she proposed that Michael Kelly should accompany her as first tenor on an engagement she was about to fulfil at Gratz in Styria. Of course he accepted, for the terms were about a hundred pounds and lodgings free for the season. La Benini was able to tell him something of his long-tailed friend of the capon. He had been an actor and a poet, and was now supposed to be a spy in the pay of the Venetian police, a very dangerous person, one of those Kelly had been advised to avoid. But, as it was, he had proved helpful, so Michael went to the coffee-house Andrioli frequented, and invited him to come to the Stella d'Oro tavern, where he treated *him* to a capon that was punctual to time.

Kelly travelled with La Benini in her own carriage to Gratz, accompanied as usual by her husband, her black boy, and lap-dog. He was a great success at first in the operas, *La vera Costanza* and Grétry's *Selima and Azor*, when he and Signora Benini sang the title rôles. The story of the opera is that of Beauty and the Beast, and in the last act, where the monster is transformed into the Prince, his costume is magnificent. In this scene Kelly wore a turban covered with diamonds, which were lent to him by the wife of the Governor of Gratz, a lady so famed for enamelling her complexion that she was said not to have seen her own face for many years. She took a great interest in the opera and the singers, and, not liking the manner of Kelly's hairdressing, told him it would look better if combed off his forehead, adding the advice: "My good young man, bear in mind what I now say; while you live, eat and drink to please yourself; but in dress, always study to please others."

Towards the end of his engagement, as the result of a cold, Kelly was afflicted with a relaxation of the throat which deprived him of the power of intonation, or, rather, caused him to sing a note sharp above the pitch of the instruments. He was advised to return to the warmer air of Italy. The temporary loss of his voice was a sad reverse of fortune, just as he had become the double favourite of stage and society. But he took the advice given to him, and went back to Venice, stopping *en route* at Padua and finding the post-roads of Austria very rough, and the post-waggon bad and extortionate. He had for companion Melaga, stage-manager of the theatre at Gratz, an amusing person who had been a soldier and then resided at a place in Alsace on the very spot where Voltaire, when travelling, was taken seriously ill. In this locality, Voltaire was entirely unknown, either as writer or sceptic, and the Alsatian family in whose house he was, and who spoke hardly any French, thought the best thing they could do for a dying man was to send for a priest. Voltaire's hatred for monks and priests did not dispose him to welcome the unexpected visitor, a simple, pious man, who, when he approached the bed, said to Voltaire, in French, "Sir, can you speak French?" The philosopher expressed emotion not in keeping with that word, and called to his valet to kick the priest downstairs.

Back in Venice, Kelly recovered the full use of his voice in time, and through the offices of his long-tailed friend, the police-spy, obtained an engagement to sing as tenor in a comic opera company at Brescia during the great Fair, which is frequented by vast numbers of people from all parts of Italy. The terms were eighty Venetian gold ducats for the season of two months. The prima donna was the beautiful Ortabella, with whom Kelly had sung in his first Italian engagement at Florence. At Brescia, Bertini, the manager of the theatre, had arranged for Kelly to have rooms at the sign of The Lobster, the same house where, on the first floor, was lodged La Bella Ortabella herself, a matter which was to bring trouble to the youthful tenor above. However, rehearsals commenced happily, and Cimarosa's opera, *Il Pittore Parigino*, with Kelly as the painter, gave much satisfaction to crowded Brescia. The theatre was a splendid building ornamented with mirrors in the style of San Carlos at Naples, and with tip-up seats in the pit as in the modern mode. There was also a fine *corps-de-ballet* attached to the theatre. The proprietor of the place now comes upon the scene, and how Kelly offended him is best related in the boy's own words :

"The proprietor, who was, in fact, our ostensible manager, was a most celebrated personage, Il Cavaliere Manuel, surnamed 'Il Cavaliere Prepotente'—a man of inordinately bad character, and implacable in his revenge, wherever he took offence. He was enormously rich, but never would pay any evitable debt, which, in some degree, accounted for his wealth ; indeed, it was at the risk of life that anybody pressed him for money ; he had in his pay a set of *sicari* (assassins), who wore his livery, and, when commanded by him, would shoot any person in the streets at noonday—woe to the man marked for his vengeance. The dress of these assassins, who were mostly mountaineers from his own estates, consisted of scarlet breeches and waistcoats, and green jackets ; their long hair was tied up in nets ; they wore enormous whiskers, and large cocked hats with gold buttons and loops ; in their belts were pistols, carbines at their backs, and large rapiers by their sides ; and yet those ruffians walked the streets at liberty, and, though known by all classes, none dare molest or take notice of them. The Venetian Senate, whose subjects they were, never could subdue them though they used every means in their power to do so ; and such was the state of society at the period of which I speak that there was scarcely a noble Brescian who had not a set of them in his service, and rarely a week passed without an assassination.

"While I was there, one of these fellows walked up to a coffee-house, tapped a gentleman on the shoulder, and begged of him to stand aside ; he then levelled his carbine at a person who was sitting on a bench at the coffee-house door, and shot him dead on the spot ; yet no one had sufficient courage to secure the murderer, who, with the greatest *sang-froid*, walked unmolested to the church of the Jesuits, de la Grazie, where he was in perfect security.

"Unfortunately for me, this Cavaliere Manuel made proposals to the Prima Donna, La Ortabella, which she had the courage to reject. He attributed her coolness to a partiality which he suspected she had for me ; and told her that her refusal of the honour he offered of his protection was owing to her preference of a vulgar singer, and swore that my interference should be the worst act of my life. She told me this, and felt alarmed for my safety. A foolish frolic increased his hatred towards me.

"One day, looking at the frolic and fun going forward in the Fiera, with three or four of the opera singers, I saw a Neapolitan mountebank, mounted on a stage, holding forth to the crowd, telling their fortunes. 'Egad !' said I, to my companions, 'I have a mind to ask the mountebank a question which concerns us all' : they entreated me to do so. I accordingly made my way to the rostrum, slipped half a silver ducat into the mountebank's hand, and said to him, 'Most potent astrologer, my companions and myself, convinced of your great science, are anxious that you should resolve the question I shall put to you.'

"The mountebank pocketed the half ducat, and with becoming gravity desired me to state the case. 'The question is,' said I, 'one which we, performers of the theatre in Brescia, are most anxious to get answered ; it is, whether the proprietor will pay us our salaries when they become due ?' The mountebank replied, 'Not one sou, if he can help it.'

"I left him, and told my companions the prognostication, which they thought it extremely probable would be verified : this trifling circumstance was, of course, repeated by some of my good friends to his Excellency, who was weak enough to take it as an offence, and told Bertini that, were it not to stop the performance of the theatre, he would annihilate me forthwith ; but that, at all events, a day of retribution should come ere long.

" My friend Bertini came and told me this, and advised me to be upon my guard whenever I went out. I went to wait upon Signor Conte Momolo Lana, the gentleman to whom Signora Benetti had given me a letter of recommendation, and told him what had passed, and the danger I thought I had to dread. He said he believed, from the well-known implacable temper of my enemy, that I had everything to fear. ' But,' said he, ' Manuel must know that you are under my protection, and I assure you that, if he assassinates you, I will revenge you.' I thanked the Count for his kind intentions, but told him I would rather not trouble him, and that I thought the best thing I could do was to beat a retreat.

" The Count said I must be cautious how I did that, for if he got a scent of my intentions he would order his *sicari* to dispatch me. ' There is but one thing you can do,' said he, ' to get out of his reach, and I will give you every aid to accomplish it. The grand ballet of *The Siege of Troy*, which is now performing, lasts an hour and a half at least, and is played after the first act of the opera ; immediately before the ballet commences, go to your room, change the coat and waistcoat in which you perform, and put on your own ; then lock your door, put your pelisse over you, watch your opportunity while they are in the bustle of preparing the ballet, slip out at the door at the back of the stage, and at the bottom of the street you will find my travelling carriage ready. My servant Stephano shall accompany you till he places you safe in Verona ; once there, you are out of the reach of Manuel and his assassins ; there he has no power to harm you. I will give you a letter of recommendation to my intimate friend and relation, the Marquis Bevil Acqua, who has interest sufficient to render you every service ; he is a worthy man, and a great patron of the arts.' He then offered to accommodate me with the loan of money, which I refused, as I had my father's remittance untouched, which was most ample for all my present wants.

" It was agreed that I should put his excellent project into execution the next night ; he wrote me the letter for the Marquis

Bevil Acqua, and the next evening I followed his directions implicitly, got to the end of the street, found the faithful Stephano, and, as fast as the horses could carry us on an excellent road, at full speed, escaped from Brescia and its threatened perils. I was full of terror till we got a few miles distant; we found horses ready at the first stage, and did not stop till we arrived at Desenzano, on the Lago di Garda, where we were beyond all dread of pursuit. I managed to send a small bundle of clothes the evening before I quitted Brescia to Stephano, which he put into his master's carriage; my trunks I left behind me, and requested my kind friend Count Momolo Lana to send them immediately after me to Verona, gave him the amount of what I had to pay for my lodgings, and begged him to write me an account of the sensation my escape made, and to give every publicity to the reasons why I quitted the place. I also left with him a letter to deliver to my kind and friendly Signora Ortabella, expressing the great regret I felt in quitting her, and hoping we should soon meet on safer ground than Brescia, where a man ran the risk, if only commonly attentive to a woman, of having half a dozen bullets put into his body.

"I arrived safe at Verona, which I thought rather fortunate, as the greatest part of the road from Desenzano was infested by numerous banditti. I scarcely travelled a quarter of a mile without seeing a little wooden cross stuck by the roadside, as a mark that someone had been murdered on the spot. I put up at the sign of the Duo Torri, and the day after my arrival hired a pair of horses to take the Count Lana's carriage and his faithful Stephano back to Brescia. On the third day of my residence in Verona, I received a letter from the Count, together with my trunks: he mentioned in his letter that on the night of my departure, when the ballet was over, and the second act of the opera just about to begin, the greatest confusion prevailed amongst the performers; they searched everywhere for me, sent to my lodgings, where of course they could obtain no information, but they had not the slightest suspicion of my flight. An apology was necessarily made from the stage to the public, stating that I was not to be found; and, perforce, the opera was acted omitting the scenes in which I was concerned.

"Immediately afterwards, my friend the Count caused the letter I had written, explaining the reasons for my departure, and stating all that Count Manuel had told Bertini of his intention to annihilate me, to be printed and widely circulated. In his letter to me, he mentioned that he had a double motive for thus effectually giving publicity to my case; in the first place, he was anxious to exculpate me with the public for breaking my engagement, and in the second, his object was to deter my enemy from following up his revengeful threats, for that, if any serious mischance should befall me, the world would, after such an exposition, naturally conclude him to be the author of it, and that he would consequently become responsible. He added, that the public considered me perfectly justified in my conduct."

Kelly found his new friends in Verona very interested in the romantic causes of his flight from Brescia. It was not a very dignified or gallant exit: but, still, discretion is the better part of valour, and there was certainly no wisdom in remaining to be murdered at the age of nineteen by a jealous ruffian when life and pleasure lay fair before him. The Marquis of Bevil Acqua and his wife arranged a concert for him, and it was conducted by Barbella, the chief musician of Verona. The receipts amounted to £30, and the next morning came an offer of an engagement at Treviso for six weeks. Before setting out for that place, Kelly was taken by the Marquis of Bevil Acqua to see the tomb of Juliet in the church of San Fermo Maggiore, Verona; even in those days the tomb was mutilated by souvenir-hunters, who were in the habit of breaking off pieces of the stone as relics. He took leave of the Marquis and Marchioness of Bevil Acqua "with grateful regret; they were all affability and condescension: indeed, I liked everything about them, except their name, to which, Bevil Acqua—in English, Drinkwater—at no period of my life could I bring myself to be partial, although there are several very estimable persons so called in England at this moment." The Marquis gave him a letter of introduction to the Signora Marcello at Treviso, a lady whose husband was a descendant of Benedetto Marcello (1686–1739), the celebrated composer of sacred music. At her house, Kelly met the beautiful Teresa de Petris, a dilettante singer of high repute. She was married to Signor Veniera, but lived with her *cavaliere servente*, Count Vidiman, a rich young Venetian devoted to music and to her. He was the patron of the composer, Anfossi, and engaged Kelly, at the wish of de Petris, to sing with her in the oratorio composed expressly for her by Anfossi. This work was to be performed at Count Pepoli's private theatre in Venice, but not until the season of Lent ; so, after the end of the opera season in Treviso, Kelly determined to fill in the interval by visiting Parma and Modena, particularly as Count Vidiman had furnished him with a letter of introduction to the Archduchess of Parma, sister of Marie Antoinette and Maria Carolina of Naples, and a great lover of music. At the door of the post-house of Modena, Kelly recognised Fochetti, the bass singer who had performed with him on the stage in Dublin some years before. The unexpected meeting was a joy to both, and they passed the evening together, talking of old days in Ireland. Fochetti was now retired from the stage, and held the position of first bass singer at the chapel of the reigning Duke in his native town of Modena. The next morning Kelly's friend showed him the palace and its superb paintings by Correggio, and the town of Modena, famed as the birthplace of Tasso. And so on to Parma, famous for truffles and cheese—though Parmesan cheese was really made at Piacenza and Lodi. The kind reception Kelly received from the Archduchess of Parma (daughter of the Empress Maria Theresa) provides excellent proof of a matter I alluded to earlier in this narrative, namely the interest royal and noble persons entertained for all artistes in the eighteenth century, and how ready they were to offer friendly patronage and hospitality. Thus Kelly relates :

" In the morning I was informed that Her Royal Highness the Archduchess was at her villa at Colorno, a few miles from town. I therefore hired a carriage, and proceeded thither. I was struck with the magnificence of the palace, and the beauty of the grounds, as I approached the end of my journey ; which having achieved, I announced myself to Her Royal Highness's Chamberlain, and informed him that I came to Colorno to present Her Royal Highness with some letters from Treviso ; the Chamberlain conducted me immediately to Her Royal Highness's presence. I found her in her billiard-room, playing with some of her suite (amongst whom were the favourite musicians belonging to her band), and without appearing to possess the smallest pride, putting every person completely at his ease by her fascinating condescension. She seemed in perfect good humour with her game, at which she appeared a great proficient.

"After it was concluded, she came up to me, inquired most kindly after Il Cavaliere Giustiniani, conversed with me for some time about Naples particularly, and asked me if I had ever seen her sister, the Queen of Naples. I replied that I had had the honour of singing before Her Majesty at Posilipo. 'Had you?' said Her Royal Highness. 'Then you shall also sing before her sister at Colorno. Remain here a few days, if you have time to spare, and we will have a little music.' She then left the billiard-room, and desired Count Palavacini, her Chamberlain, to introduce me to the gentlemen of her private band; they were all great favourites with her. I dined with them, and they were particularly attentive to me, and had an excellent table kept for them, covered with the best viands and choicest wines. I paid my respects to the Burgundy, which, to be sure, was delicious.

"In the evening there was a concert, which Her Royal Highness, attended by several ladies of the court, honoured with her presence. She was perfectly affable to all the professors in the orchestra, and presided herself at the pianoforte. The whole band was worthy of its reputation. If there were any superiority amongst them, in my opinion, it was in the French horns, played by two brothers (whose names I have forgotten); such tones I never heard from the instrument as those which they produced, in a duet they played.

"I sang Sarti's rondo of 'Teco resti, anima mia,' and accompanied myself on the pianoforte. Her Royal Highness did me the honour to approve, and asked me who was my instructor; when I mentioned Aprile, she said that I certainly had had the advantage of the best of singing masters.

"At ten o'clock the concert finished, and I retired to supper with the rest of the professors, and in the morning, two gentlemen of the band took me in a court carriage to see some of the beauties of the neighbourhood. At twelve o'clock we attended Her Royal Highness at the billiard-table, where she appeared in a morning dress, with a large apron before her, with pockets, in which she kept a quantity of silver coins; she always played for some trifling stake, and was very anxious to be the winner. She asked me if I was fond of billiards, and if I played. I said I had always been partial to it. 'Come,' said she, 'you shall try a game with me.' I had the honour of doing so, but Her Royal Highness beat me hollow.

"She possessed a very fine person, very tall, and rather large; her features were masculine, but still there was a likeness between her and her sisters, the Queens of France and Naples. But I was told by Count Palavacini that she was much more like her mother the Empress Maria Theresa than either of them. The Archduke of Parma, her husband, and herself were upon good terms, but seldom together; either of them had pursuits diametrically opposite to the other's taste: she, a clever, acute woman, was fond of pleasure; on the contrary, he was esteemed very weak, a great bigot, and half a madman; his chief amusement and delight was, at different periods of the year, accompanied by some of the favourite noblemen of his court, to go every step of the way on foot to the different cities and towns of his Dukedom; to visit the different churches, and hang up tapestry, and this, too, let the distance be what it would from his capital. He was said never to be happy but in a church, mounted on a ladder, with a hammer in his hand. This mania was spoken of in all parts of Italy, insomuch that he was nicknamed the Royal Upholsterer; but, with the exception of this strange propensity, he was thought harmless and good-natured.[1]

"I stopped a week at Colorno, where there was music every night, and had great pleasure in hearing the Archduchess's performance. On my taking leave of Her Royal Highness, she gave me a rouleau of fifty zecchinos, and a beautiful little enamelled watch, set round with small diamonds, and a gold chain; on my kissing her hand for her liberality and condescending kindness, she was pleased to compliment me, and wished me every success. I took my dutiful leave of her, and bade adieu to the gentlemen of the orchestra, whose kindness and attention were so marked during my delightful stay at Colorno."

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[1] This was the Bourbon Don Ferdinand (first cousin of Ferdinand IV, King of the Two Sicilies), who through his grandmother, Elizabeth Farnese, was a descendant of the ancient dynasty of Parma. She married Philip V of Spain, and Parma came to the Bourbons by the Treaty of Aix-la-Chapelle in 1748. Ferdinand, as Kelly points out, was entirely given to the interests of the Church and its adornments, and was the most priest-ridden of sovereigns. A rude awakening came when Napoleon invaded Parma in 1796, for his exactions, including the theft of twenty of the Duke's most valuable paintings, were terrible. Ferdinand died in 1802, and three years later Parma and Piacenza were added to the French Empire. After the downfall of Napoleon, the Congress of Vienna granted, in 1814, the two States to his wife, Marie Louise, as her apanage.

Kelly returned to Venice in October (1782) for the rehearsals of Anfossi's oratorio, and at the request of Count Vidiman took up his residence with Signora Teresa de Petris, who kept a table worthy of Apicius, and all through the Carnival he lived "in the lap of luxury and in a vortex of pleasure." During this season his friend, Nancy Storace, came to Venice and achieved an immense success; the theatre overflowed; her mother stood at the door to receive the copious rain of cash, and the presents of the warm-hearted Venetians, rings, chains, and all manner of jewellery, which they showered upon the English prima donna, who was not more than sixteen years of age and yet was the first performer to be given the privilege of a benefit in Venice. There was one annoying penalty of her fame. She had no sister, but an adventuress came to Venice, and, taking up her quarters in the Calla di Carbone, the part of the city where prostitutes were compelled to reside, she had her portrait hung out of the window, "for it had been the ancient custom in Venice for harlots to hang their portraits outside their windows in order to attract custom and visitors,"[1] with the inscription, in Italian, "This is the portrait of Signora Storace's sister." The ruse succeeded beyond all expectation, and the woman's rooms were crowded daily by all ranks of people anxious to see the supposed sister of the popular diva, whereby the impostor reaped a rich harvest from the entrance fees paid for admission to inspect her and the subsequent sums paid, by those who desired her, for professional services. Eventually the aid of the law was sought by Nancy Storace, and the adventuress was imprisoned, and later banished from the Venetian State.

In Lent, Petris and Kelly sang with great success in the oratorio by Anfossi, who specially composed a song for Kelly, at the request of Count Vidiman, and sent it from London. Kelly is now approaching the pinnacle of his success as a singer, and in the next step of his career good fortune again came to him through a chance meeting with an influential person, aided

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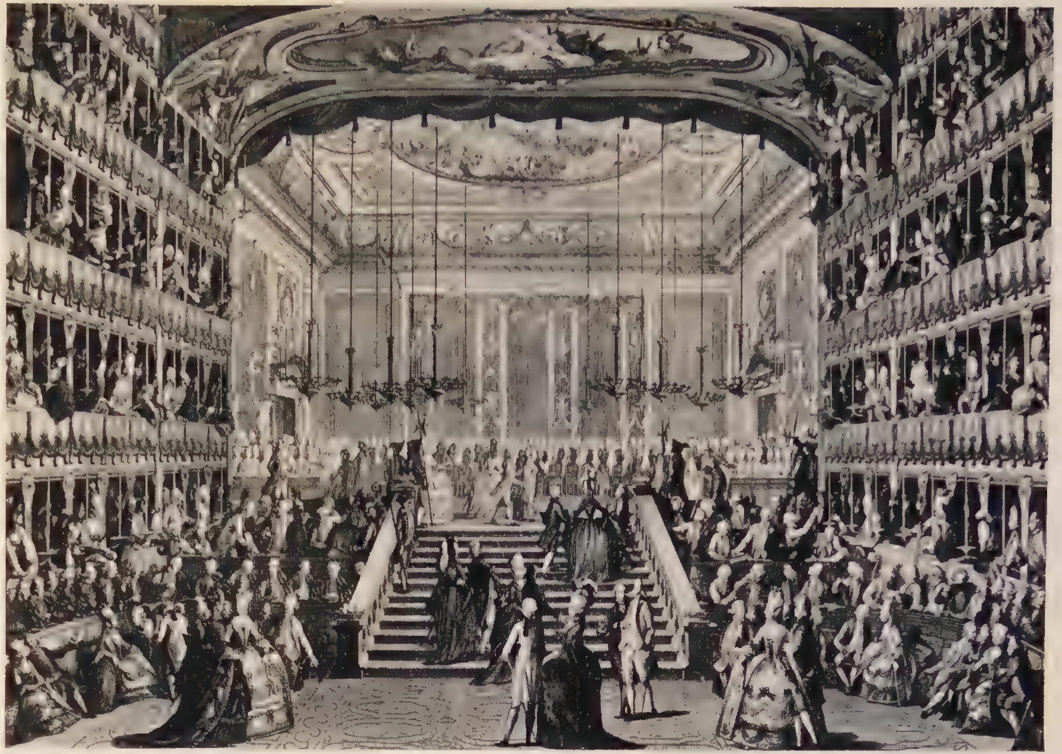
[1] Kelly adds a note that when Kemble revived Mrs. Aphra Behn's comedy of *The Rover* at Drury Lane, under the title of *Love in Many Masks*, there was a character of a woman of this class whose portrait was seen hanging out of a balcony on the stage.



FÊTE IN THE THEATRE OF SAN BENEDETTO, VENICE, 22ND JANUARY, 1782, IN HONOUR OF THE RUSSIAN GRAND DUKE AND GRAND DUCHESS

From a print in the British Museum by A. Baratti after G. B. Canal

by his own happy Irish personality, with its capacity for ready friendship and a special gift for attracting the regard and remembrance of the people, however eminent, he met.

When in Styria he had become acquainted with several distinguished compatriots, Irish and impoverished officers who had enlisted in the Austrian service and risen to high rank, among them being Generals Dillon, Kavanagh, and Dalton. The last named, in particular, did much for his young fellow-countryman, whose father he remembered in Ireland. It was he who introduced Michael to the wife of the Governor of Gratz, the lady before mentioned who lent her diamonds for the adorning of his turban when singing the operatic rôle of Azor; and when Kelly was compelled by circumstances, already related, to return to Venice, General Dalton gave him letters of recommendation to the Austrian Ambassador in that city, Count Durazzo, and to several other influential persons there, including the Countess von Rosenberg, whom, he says, the Venetians considered "a grand dilettante." She was also *grande dame* as the widow of a former Austrian ambassador in Venice, though she had led *une vie déréglée* in her youth. She was partly English, Giustiniana, illegitimate daughter of Richard Wynne (styling himself a baronet) by a beautiful Greek named Anna Gazzini. She was born in 1737, and by her lover, Andrea Memmo, a Venetian youth of patrician birth (who a quarter of a century later was Venetian Ambassador in London), she had a child, born in secret at a convent near Paris in 1759. She had been assisted to this retreat, and in an earlier attempt at abortion, by Casanova, the episode being described in his *Memoirs* as "The Adventure with Mademoiselle X. C. V. and the drug aroph." Giustiniana never married the father of her child, for the Fates and their relatives were antagonistic: instead, she wedded, at the age of twenty-four, an elderly man, the Count von Rosenberg und Orsini.[1] He died in 1765, and the previous year he had been succeeded as Austrian Ambassador in Venice by Durazzo, who was still holding that post in 1783 when Kelly presented his letter of introduction from General Dalton, with this important result: Michael Kelly received a message from the Austrian Ambassador desiring that he would call, and when he arrived, Count Durazzo informed him that he had been directed by Count Rosenberg, Grand Chamberlain of the Emperor Joseph II, to engage a company of Italian Opera singers for the Court of Vienna. No expense was to be spared, and only artistes of the first rank were to be recruited. He then offered Kelly engagement for a year, at a salary of four hundred Venetian golden ducats (£200), with free lodging, fuel, and four large wax candles per day. Kelly was delighted, especially when he heard that Madame Storace was also engaged, together with Bennuci and Mandini, the two best comic opera singers of Europe.

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[1] A most interesting account of Giustiniana Wynne's career will be found in a book bearing the misleading title, *Casanova Loved Her*, by Bruno Brunelli, published in 1929. This contains, in addition to the adventure with Casanova, Giustiniana's letters to Andrea Memmo recording the progress and decline of their passion, an account of the circumstances that attended her second marriage and of her subsequent widowhood in Venice and Padua, where she held a salon of literature and the arts, together with her life in the exquisite garden villa, Altichiero, on the banks of the River Brenta. She died at Padua in 1791.

The decision to form this Italian Opera Company arose in a curious way. For some years past the musical entertainments of the Court of Vienna had been provided by a company of French players, who were prone to give themselves airs. They had apartments in the Palace of Schoenbrunn, and a liberal table at the Imperial provision. One day, while the Frenchmen were drinking their wine and abusing it, the Emperor (the son of Maria Theresa) passed by their dining-room, which opened into the Royal gardens. One of the actors, " with the innate modesty so peculiarly belonging to his nation and profession," jumped up from the table with a glass of wine in his hand, overtook his Majesty, and said: " Sire, I have brought Your Majesty some of the trash which is given us, as wine, by your purveyor. We are all disgusted at his treatment and beg to request Your Majesty to order something better, for it is absolutely impossible for us to drink this stuff. He says it is Burgundy: do taste it, Sire, and I am sure you will say it is not." The Emperor, with great coolness, tasted the wine, and said: " I think it excellent —at least, quite good enough for *me*, though, perhaps, not sufficiently high-flavoured for *you* and *your* companions. In France, I dare say, you will get much better." He then turned on his heel, and, sending immediately for his Grand Chamberlain, ordered the whole corps of French actors to be discharged, and expelled from Vienna forthwith. They repented their folly and tried to apologise, but His Majesty would never hear more of them. They went, and their audacity led at once to the introduction of the Italian Opera Company, engaged at Venice, with Storace and Kelly as two of the principal stars.

Making his adieux to the Countess von Rosenberg and other Venetian friends,[1] Kelly bade farewell with real regret to the happy land of Italy, where in four golden years of song he had gathered up so many shining sheaves of success and friendship, when, even now, he was but twenty years old, and the future lay before him with brighter prospects still—*Fortunæ Filius* indeed.

He left Venice in a *calessetto*, accompanied by his servant, stopping at Udine, beneath the Carnic Alps, where he had letters of introduction to the mother of Count Vidiman and to a Venetian nobleman, Count Manini, who invited him to stay two days at his magnificent seat, Pascan, and, on his departure, ordered some delicious wine, made on the estate and called Picolet (tasting like Tokay), to be put into Kelly's *calessetto*. And so through the romantic land of Carinthia (where, happily, the indigenous vampires spared his young blood rich with the Picolet) to Vienna, when, on arriving, the traveller put up at the sign of The White Ox.

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[1] Among Kelly's friends in Venice was the veteran Sachi, a man of great humour and wit. He told Kelly about an acquaintance of his, a self-made person who had acquired a barony by purchase. "The inordinate pride of this novus homo rendered him universally ridiculous; but he was much flattered with having the witty Sachi in his train, who laughed at him even while loading him with adulation. As they were walking along one day, some priests, carrying the Host to a dying person, passed them; every one in the street, as it is the custom in all Roman Catholic countries, fell on their knees, with their heads bare, bowing to the ground; amongst the rest, the proud baron knelt with great devotion; Sachi, who was close to him, only took his hat off, and slightly inclined his head as the Host went by, and did not go on his knees. The baron, quite shocked at this apparent want of respect and religion, exclaimed with affected humility, 'Signor Sachi, I am petrified; to a poor miserable mortal like myself you pay every obsequious homage: yet when the holy Host passed you, instead of prostrating yourself before it, you only made a slight inclination with your head.' 'Very true, my Lord,' replied Sachi; 'I admit the fact, but the Host must not be made game of, and that makes all the difference.'"

Chapter III

The Court Singer of Vienna

On the morning following his arrival in Vienna, Kelly waited upon Signor Salieri, a Venetian, sub-director of the Imperial theatre, who had been a scholar of the celebrated composer, Guzman, and much resembled Garrick in appearance. He informed Kelly that his own opera, *La Scuola dei Gelosi*, was to be the first production, and that in this work Michael would make his début. He then showed the young tenor his apartments, a first and second floor, " elegantly furnished," and, in addition to the fuel and four wax candles daily, he was provided with a carriage to take him to the theatre whenever he performed. Kelly next presented his letters of introduction, furnished by the Countess of Rosenberg, to her stepson, Count Rosenberg, Grand Chamberlain of the Court, and to Prince Charles of Liechtenstein (Governor of Vienna), and to Sir Robert Keith (the British Minister) ; while Count Durazzo had given him letters to Prince de Ligne, and the Marshals Lacy and Laudon. He received the kindest reception from them all, as well as from Prince Auersburg. Sir Robert Keith advanced his prospects at the theatre in every possible way. This distinguished Ambassador had been a soldier ; he was on the staff of Lord George Sackville at Minden in 1759, and commanded the 87th Foot in the Seven Years' War. When British Envoy at Copenhagen in 1772, he rescued Caroline Matilda, Queen of Denmark (sister of George III) after the discovery of her intrigue with Struensee, when her life was in danger, and conducted her to Celle. Keith came to Vienna later in the same year, where he remained until 1792. Marshal Lacy was of Irish birth, but had become Russian : whereas Marshal Laudon was of Scotch extraction and a Livonian by birth; he rose to the highest distinction in the Austrian service[1] and was a doughty opponent of Frederick the Great, who greatly admired his military ability. Prince de Ligne told Kelly that on one occasion, in an interval of peace between Austria and Prussia, Frederick was in Silesia at the same time as Marshal Laudon and Ligne. The

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[1] Later, Marshal Laudon took Belgrade from the Turks in 1789.

King gave a dinner, when Laudon was placed opposite to Frederick at table. The Prussian King rose, and said : " Marshal Laudon, I request you will quit your seat and come and sit by me, for, believe me (and with sincerity I speak it), I always prefer having you at my side to having you opposed to me." Marshal Lacy was a fine-looking man, convivial and free ; he had amassed a splendid fortune and lived in princely style. As Kelly truly said, it was indeed a great event in a young man's life to be seated at the same table with these two military heroes, rivals in the art of war, yet attached friends ; and he had good reason to be delighted with his situation, where he had an ample salary, the best of society, and a most friendly reception whenever he appeared on the stage. The Emperor, Joseph II, with his brother, Maximilian, Archbishop of Cologne, were present at the first performance, and accorded him their applause.

At this period Vienna was the most brilliant Court in Europe, and all the city was given up to gaiety and pleasure by day and by night. The Royal Theatre was crowded with a blaze of beauty and splendour. There was constant colour from the gorgeous uniforms of the officers of the Hungarian and Polish regiments. All ranks were devoted to music and dancing. The chief public rendezvous was the Prater and the banks of the superb River Danube. Kelly related :

" The Prater I consider the finest promenade in Europe, far surpassing in variety our own beautiful Hyde Park. It is about four miles in length ; on each side of the road are fine chestnut-trees, and a number of avenues and retired drives. These roads, on spring and summer evenings, are thronged with carriages. On all sides, as in our Hyde Park and Bushy Park, deer are seen quietly grazing, and gazing at the passing crowds. At the end of the principal avenue is an excellent tavern, besides which, in many other parts of this enchanting spot, there are innumerable cabarets, frequented by people of all ranks in the evening, who immediately after dinner proceed thither to regale themselves with their favourite dish, fried chickens, cold ham, and sausages ; white beer, and Hofner wines, by way of dessert ; and stay there until a late hour : dancing, music, and every description of merriment prevail ; and every evening, when not professionally engaged, I was sure to be in the midst of it.

" The Danube runs through part of this charming retreat. One evening, Salieri proposed to me to accompany him to the Prater. At this time he was composing his opera of *Tarare* for the Grand Opera House at Paris. At the back of the cabaret where we had been taking refreshments, near the banks of the Danube, we seated ourselves by the riverside ; he took from his pocket a sketch of that subsequently popular air which he had that morning composed, ' Ah ! povero Calpigi.' While he was singing it to me with great earnestness and gesticulation, I cast my eyes towards the river and spied a large wild boar crossing it near the place where we were seated. I took to my heels, and the composer followed me, leaving ' Povero Calpigi,' and (what was worse) a flagon of excellent Rhenish wine behind us, which was to me a greater bore than the bristly animal whose visit seemed intended for us. The story was food for much laughter when we were out of danger. Salieri, indeed, would make a joke of anything, for he was a very pleasant man and much esteemed at Vienna, and I considered myself in high luck to be noticed by him."

" The people of Vienna were in my time dancing mad ; as the Carnival approached, gaiety began to display itself on all sides, and when it really came nothing could exceed its brilliancy. The Ridotto Rooms, where the masquerades took place, were in the palace, and, spacious and commodious as they were, they were actually crammed with masqueraders. I never saw, or indeed heard of, any suite of rooms where elegance and convenience were more considered ; for the propensity of the Vienna ladies for dancing and going to carnival masquerades was so determined that nothing was permitted to interfere with their enjoyment of their favourite amusement—nay, so notorious was it, that, for the sake of ladies in the family way, who could not be persuaded to stay at home, there were apartments prepared, with every convenience, for their accouchement, should they be unfortunately required. And I have been gravely told, and almost believe, that there have actually been instances of the utility of the arrangement. The ladies of Vienna are particularly celebrated for their grace and movements in waltzing, of which they never tire. For my own part, I thought waltzing from ten at night until seven in the morning, a continual whirligig, most tiresome to the eye, and ear—to say nothing of any worse consequences."

Kelly's account of the vogue of the waltz in Vienna in 1783 (eighty years before it reached its acme with *The Blue Danube* and the other flowing melodies of the Strauss family) is of interest, for the dance did not reach England until 1791. Miss Mitford mentions learning the waltz in 1801. Writing from Germany in 1799, Coleridge describes the voluptuous waltzes at Rubëland, and a year later Henry Crabb Robinson mentions the same dance at Frankfort. During the Peace of Amiens, 1802, Farington gives an amusing picture of waltzing at the Tivoli Gardens in Paris : " One tune seemed to have a magical effect upon them, it was that of the ' Walse Dance.' I observed that in this dance the man makes a circle with his arms, within which the woman continually turns round. Many of the woemen assumed attitudes while turning to appear easy and graceful, and those who were most perfect in it seemed to receive scarcely the touch of a finger from a man." But things were very different in 1812, when the dance had become the rage in England, for Byron in his satirical attack, *The Waltz* (1813), wrote :

Hot from the hands promiscuously applied
Round the light waist, or down the flowing side,
Where were the rapture then to clasp the form
From this lewd grasp and lawless contact warm?

In 1812, too, Lady Caroline Lamb relates that, as waltzes were not allowed at Devonshire House, " we had them in the great drawing-room at Whitehall. . . . There was nothing so fashionable."

Kelly continues : " One evening, at one of these masquerades, a well-turned compliment was paid to the Emperor, by a gentleman who went in the character of Diogenes with his lantern, in search of a man. In going round the room he suddenly met the Emperor. He immediately made a low obeisance to His Majesty, and, opening his lantern, extinguished the candle, saying, in a loud tone, ' Io trovato il uomo ' (' I have found the man ') ; he then took his departure, and left the ball-room. He was said to have been a courtier, but none of the courtiers would admit that he was.

" Another favourite amusement, going forward at this period of the year, is a *course de traîneaux*, or procession of sledges. These sledges are richly ornamented, and carved with figures of all kinds of monsters, and inlaid with burnished gold, etc. A vast number of *carrettas* and carts, on the day previous to this singular spectacle, gather snow and distribute it along the principal streets of Vienna, in order that the sledges may be drawn with perfect security. The effect at night, by torch-light, is like enchantment. I have seen forty or fifty sledges drawn up, one behind the other; in every sledge was a lady seated, covered with diamonds, in furs and pelisses; behind each was a gentleman, as magnificently dressed, driving; before each sledge were two running footmen, having long poles, with knobs of silver at their ends. The Hungarian Prince Dietrichstein,[1] the Grand Master of the Horse, was always the first to lead the *traîneaux*. The immense velocity with which these things are drawn is perfectly astonishing: they go on, for three or four hours, and the procession, at its close, draws up before the Emperor's palace. The running footmen have costly liveries, and the horses are caparisoned with rich trappings, and large plumes of milk-white feathers, and the spectacle, upon the whole, is very magnificent."

Kelly gives an interesting account of the habits of the Emperor Joseph II:

"As the theatre was in the palace, the Emperor often honoured the rehearsals with his presence, and discoursed familiarly with the performers. He spoke Italian like a Tuscan, and was affable and condescending. He came almost every night to the opera, accompanied by his nephew, Francis, then a youth. He usually entered his box at the beginning of the piece, but if not there at the precise moment, the curtain was to be drawn up; he had given orders that he was never to be waited for. He was passionately fond of music, and a most excellent and accurate judge of it. His mode of living was quite methodical. He got up every morning, winter and summer, at five o'clock, wrote in his *canceleria* [study] until nine, then took a cup of chocolate, and transacted business with his ministers till one. He was very partial to the *jeu de paume*,[2] and a good player. He had a fine racket court, and when not in it, he usually walked or rode from one till three: punctually, at a quarter after three, his dinner was served; he almost always dined on one dish—boiled bacon, which the people, from his partiality to it, called *caizer fleisch*, i.e. the Emperor's meat; sometimes he had a dish of Hungarian beef *bouillie*, with horseradish and vinegar, but rarely, if ever, any other: his beverage at dinner was water; and after dinner one goblet of Tokay wine. During dinner, he allowed only one servant to be in the room; and was never longer at the meal than half an hour.

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[1] Lady Hamilton's *cavaliere servente* at Naples in 1786–87—her "Draydrixton," as she called him.

[2] Tennis.

"At five, he usually walked in the corridor, near his dining-room, and whilst there was accessible to the complaints of the meanest of his subjects: he heard them with complaisance, and was ever ready to redress their grievances.[1] He generally wore either a green or white uniform faced with red; nor did I ever see him that he was not continually putting chocolate drops, which he took from his waistcoat pocket, into his mouth. When he walked out, he took a number of golden sovereigns with him, and distributed them personally among the indigent. He was an enemy to pomp and parade, and avoided them as much as possible; indeed, hardly any private gentleman requires so little attendance as he did. He had a seat for his servant behind his carriage, and when he went abroad in it (which was hardly ever the case in the day-time) he made him sit there. I was one day passing through one of the corridors of the palace, and came directly in contact with him; he had his great-coat hanging on his arm: he stopped me, and asked me in Italian if I did not think it was very hot; he told me that he felt the heat so oppressive that he had taken off his great-coat, preferring to carry it on his arm.

"To the Princesses Liechtenstein, Schwarzenberg, Lobkowitz, and the Countess Thoun, he was particularly partial, and often paid them evening visits, but always retired unattended to his carriage, which stood in the street, for he never allowed it to be driven into the courtyards, where other carriages were waiting. His desire was never to have any fuss made about him, or to give any trouble, which was all mighty amiable ; but as there is, and ought to be, in all civilised countries, a marked and decisive distinction between the Sovereign and the subject, did not appear particularly wise, even if it were not particularly affected ; and of all prides, that is the most contemptible which, as Southey says, ‘ apes humility.’

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[1] Lady Craven, afterwards Margravine of Anspach, who visited Vienna during this period, describes Joseph II in her *Memoirs*: "The Emperor was a prince who mixed with his subjects with an ease and affability that are very uncommon in persons of his rank. He loved the conversation of ingenious men, and appeared solicitous to cultivate knowledge. He abolished the use of torture in his hereditary dominions, and removed many of the grievances under which the peasants and common people laboured. He was a great friend to religious toleration; and regulated the exorbitant fees of the lawyers."

“ The present Emperor Francis, at the period of which I am writing, was as thin as possible. I do not think I ever saw so thin a youth ; his uncle was very rigid with him, and made him enter the army, mount guard, clean his horse, and go through the duties of a common soldier, until he progressively rose to the rank of an officer.[1]

“ The Emperor Joseph had a strange aversion from sitting for his portrait, although the greatest artists were anxious to have the honour of taking it. Pelegrini, the celebrated painter, solicited to be allowed the honour, but in vain. The Emperor said to him, ‘ There can be no occasion for taking up your time and mine by my sitting to you ; if you are anxious to have a likeness of me, draw the portrait of an ill-looking man, with a wide mouth and large nose, and then you will have a facsimile.’ The reverse, however, was the fact, for his Majesty had an intelligent countenance, a fine set of teeth, and when he laughed, and showed them, was rather handsome than otherwise.

“ There was a wide difference between the habits of Joseph II and those of his prime minister, Prince Kaunitz,[2] who was a most eccentric personage, but reckoned nevertheless a great statesman. He was said to be very proud of having made up the match between Louis XVI and the unfortunate Marie Antoinette. For several months in the year he kept open house for all strangers, provided they had been presented to him by their respective ambassadors ; he kept a splendid table, and those who were, by their introduction, entitled to dine with him, had only to send their names to his porter before ten o'clock in the morning. For my own part, I have wondered how he could get any persons to be his guests, so extraordinary was his mode of receiving them. He rose very late in the day, and made a point before dinner of taking a ride in his riding-house, which he never commenced until the whole of his company were assembled for dinner : after having deliberately ridden as long as he thought fit, he proceeded, without making any excuse, to make his toilette.

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[1] This was the future Emperor Francis II (1768–1835), at the time in question a boy of fifteen. His uncle, Joseph II, died in his fortieth year, in 1790, thus early fulfilling the epitaph he wrote for himself, “ Here lies Joseph, unfortunate in all his undertakings.” Francis’s father, Leopold II, only lived to occupy the throne for two years, and there were rumours that he met his death by poisoning. The reign of Francis II was chequered by his long conflicts with Napoleon ; after the Treaty of Presburg, 1805, he was compelled to relinquish the august title of Emperor of Germany and take that of Austria, while five years later his daughter, Marie Louise, was married to the conquering Bonaparte : but Francis eventually triumphed in 1814, and was one of the victorious Allied Sovereigns who visited London that year.

[2] Wenzelius Anthony Kaunitz (1711–94) had been Austrian Ambassador at the Court of France, and his general knowledge and direction of European affairs gave him the nick-name of “ The Coachman of Europe.” He was very thorough in all things, and the story is told that he was one day discovered re-lining the upholstery of his coach, as his coach-makers had not done the work to his satisfaction.

"Though a very old man, he was very fond of adorning his person, and remarkably particular in having his hair well dressed, and *bien poudré*. In order to accomplish this object, he had four valets with powder puffs, puffing away at him until his head was powdered to his satisfaction, while he walked about his dressing-room in a mask. Another of his eccentricities was, that at all times, when he had at his table ambassadors, foreigners, and ladies of the first distinction, he would, immediately after dinner, have all the apparatus for cleaning his teeth put down upon the table ; literally tooth brushes, basons, etc., and, without the least excuse to his company, would go through the whole process of cleaning his teeth ; a ceremony which lasted for many minutes. It was justly said of him that he first made his guests sick by making them wait so long for their dinner, and that after they had dined he made them sick again by this filthy custom. But in everything else he was a strict observer of etiquette, and piqued himself on it ; thinking, with Lord Chesterfield, that etiquette was the characteristic excellence of good society."

Italian operas were performed three times a week ; the other four nights, including Sundays, were devoted to plays in German. It is interesting to note that Shakspere was very popular. The great actor Schroëder, who was called the Garrick of Germany, excelled in King Lear ; he was also excellent as Sir

Peter Teazle, and as Sir Benjamin Dove in Cumberland's play of *The Brothers*. Another actor named Brockman played Hamlet and Othello. On one occasion when he acted the Moor, the Emperor was so delighted that he ordered Brockman to repeat the performance before him on the following night. Brockman, who much disliked blacking his face, as was necessary before assuming the similitude of the Dusky Potentate, duly " made up " for the first performance, and on the next night Kelly went to dine with him, together with other friends, before the play commenced. To their surprise, Brockman presided at his table with his face as black as it had been the night before. He said he found the process of blacking his face so painful, that, rather than undergo the same experience on the following night, he had sat up all the preceding night in an arm-chair. Another popular play in Vienna at this date was Cumberland's *West Indian*, with Schroëder in the part of Major O'Flaherty, and, strange to relate, the Austrian audience relished immensely this national Irish character, though O'Flaherty is a part, in the original, that depends for success on the presentation of the Irish brogue. Even the inimitable comedian, Jack Johnstone, did not satisfy John Philpot Curran as O'Flaherty, for he said, " I thought it an able representation of the Irish gentleman, but not of the Irish brogue—Jack Johnstone does not *give* us the brogue, he *translates* it."

Another popular English play was *The Country Girl*, in which the incomparable and lovely Madame Ademberger gave a performance greatly resembling that of Mrs. Jordan in the same rôle at Drury Lane during this period. It was at this date also that dramatic studies called Monologues were popular in Vienna, and for the first time the different speeches were accompanied by what is now called incidental music. Madame Sacqui, about whom still lingered the rays of beauty, was truly terrific as Medea, accompanied by the sublime music of Benda. Another monologue, entitled *Ariadne and Theseus*, with music by Graun (the favourite composer of Frederick the Great), was divinely acted by Mademoiselle Jacquet, the sister of the beautiful Ademberger, of whom it was said that she united the elegance of the Graces with the talents of the Muses.

Vienna was at this period a wonderful centre for music, and a veritable galaxy of eternally famous composers then lived in or near the city—Mozart, Haydn, and Gluck were all there. Haydn was at Eisenstadt, living in the palace of Prince Esterházy, who was enormously wealthy, and lived in regal splendour, with his own regiment of guards, spending his great fortune with noble liberality and in encouragement of the arts. He was particularly fond of music, and maintained at Eisenstadt, entirely for the entertainment of himself, his friends, and his retainers, an Italian opera, a German and French theatre, the finest *fantoccini* in Europe, and a band formed of professors of the art of music, with Haydn[1] as his *maître de chapelle.* Here Haydn composed the greater part of his immortal works. Kelly went out to see him, and spent three days at Eisenstadt, the Prince directing Haydn to take one of his carriages and drive his young guest all over the estates " and see all the beauties of this terrestrial paradise." Esterházy was indeed *grand seigneur*, and all his vassals adored him.

Next, after a concert at Kozeluch's, occurred one of the most momentous events of Kelly's career—when he was introduced to " that prodigy of genius," Mozart :

" He favoured the company by performing fantasias and capriccios on the pianoforte. His feeling, the rapidity of his fingers, the great execution and strength of his left hand particularly, and the apparent inspiration of his modulations, astounded me. After this splendid performance we sat down to supper, and I had the pleasure to be placed at table between him and his wife, Madame Constance Weber, a German lady of whom he was passionately fond, and by whom he had three children. He conversed with me a good deal about Thomas Linley, the first Mrs. Sheridan's brother, with whom he was intimate at Florence, and spoke of him with great affection. He said that Linley was a true genius, and he felt that, had he lived, he would have been one of the greatest ornaments of the musical world. After supper the young branches of our host had a dance, and Mozart joined them. Madame Mozart told me, that great as his genius was, he was an enthusiast in dancing, and often said that his taste lay in that art.

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[1] Joseph Haydn (1732–1809) was at this date about fifty-two years of age. He was of humble parentage, and it was fortunate that as a young man he secured the post of Maestro di Cappella to Prince Esterházy, for here he had a safe refuge, with freedom from all financial anxiety, for the remainder of his life. Exceptional facilities for composition, too, were his, with the fine band of his patron under the same roof and available at any time for trying over a new piece of composition. His death was accelerated by shock at the bombardment of Vienna, though Napoleon gave orders that his house was to be spared, and placed a French guard at the door to protect Haydn from injury.

" He was a remarkably small man, very thin and pale, with a profusion of fine fair hair, of which he was rather vain. He gave me a cordial invitation to his house, of which I availed myself, and passed a great part of my time there. He always received me with kindness and hospitality. He was remarkably fond of punch, of which beverage I have seen him take copious draughts. He was also fond of billiards, and had an excellent billiard-table in his house. Many and many a game have I played with him, but always came off second best. He gave Sunday concerts, at which I never was missing. He was kind-hearted, and always ready to oblige, but so very particular, when he played, that if the slightest noise were made he instantly left off. He one day made me sit down to the piano, and gave credit to my first master, who had taught me to place my hand well on the instrument. He conferred on me what I considered a high compliment. I had composed a little melody to Metastasio's canzonetta, 'Grazie agl' inganni tuoi,' which was a great favourite wherever I sang it. It was very simple, but had the good fortune to please Mozart. He took it and composed variations upon it, which were truly beautiful[1]; and had the further kindness and condescension to play them wherever he had an opportunity.

" Encouraged by his flattering approbation, I attempted several little airs, which I showed him, and which he kindly approved of, so much indeed, that I determined to devote myself to the study of counterpoint, and consulted with him, by whom I ought to be instructed. He said, 'My good lad, you ask my advice, and I will give it you candidly: had you studied composition when you were at Naples, and when your mind was not devoted to other pursuits, you would perhaps have done wisely; but now that your profession of the stage must, and ought, to occupy all your attention, it would be an unwise measure to enter into a dry study. You may take my word for it, Nature has made you a melodist, and you would only disturb and perplex yourself. Reflect, " a little knowledge is a dangerous thing "; should there be errors in what you write, you will find hundreds of musicians, in all parts of the world, capable of correcting them, therefore do not disturb your natural gift. Melody is the essence of music,' continued he; 'I compare a good melodist to a fine racer, and counterpointists to hack post-horses, therefore be advised, let well alone, and remember the old Italian proverb, " Chi sa più, meno sa " (" Who knows most, knows least ").' The opinion of this great man made on me a lasting impression.

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[1] The air and variations are given in *Reminiscences of Michael Kelly.*

" My friend Attwood (a worthy man, and an ornament to the musical world) was Mozart's favourite scholar, and it gives me great pleasure to record what Mozart said to me about him; his words were, 'Attwood is a young man for whom I have a sincere affection and esteem; he conducts himself with great propriety, and I feel much pleasure in telling you, that he partakes more of my style than any scholar I ever had, and I predict that he will prove a sound musician.'[1] Mozart was very liberal in giving praise to those who deserved it; but felt a thorough contempt for insolent mediocrity. He was a member of the Philharmonic Society of Bologna and Verona, and when at Rome, the Pope conferred on him the Cross and Brevet of Knight of Le Sperone de L'Ora."

Johann Wolfgang Mozart (1756–1792) was at this date twenty-eight years old, and his short life of brilliant achievement was to end in less than another decade. He had been a child prodigy, and composed a harpsichord concerto at the age of six. Two years later he was taken to London, where he played before the Royal Family. He excited much interest in this country, and a report of his amazing performances was read before the Royal Society, and published in their *Philosophical Transactions.* When twelve years old, Mozart composed his opera, *La Finta Semplice*, and a year later he was appointed director of the concerts of the Archbishop of Salzburg. There followed several years in Italy and much composition, till, in 1779, he settled in Vienna. When twenty-five he fell in love with Constance Weber, an accomplished actress. At first her family declined his proposals on the ground that he had not yet sufficiently established his position. Upon this he composed his opera *Idomeneo*, in which Constance Weber sang the chief rôle. Great success was the result, and the lovers were then married, with most happy results. Just before Kelly came to Vienna, Mozart had produced *L'Enlèvement du Serail*,[1] and his own part in *Le Nozze di Figaro* will be narrated presently. Mozart's *chef d'œuvre*, *Don Giovanni*, appeared in 1787. *Così fan tutte* followed in 1790, and *The Magic Flute* in 1791. His sublime *Requiem* was composed on his death-bed. He died in 1792, from an attack of fever, then prevalent at Vienna, at the early age of thirty-six.

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[1] Thomas Attwood (1765–1838) as a chorister of the Chapel Royal attracted the attention of the Prince of Wales (George IV), who sent him to study music at Naples in 1783. Two years later he went to Vienna as a pupil of Mozart. Attwood was organist of St. Paul's Cathedral from 1796 until his death.

All the greatest musicians of the time stopped at Vienna, to give concerts, on their way to and from Russia and Italy, and were honoured by the presence of the Emperor. When the celebrated Marchesi sang, he was later entertained at a magnificent banquet by the Venetian Ambassador, who was a great epicure and paid his chef a salary of five hundred zecchinos (roughly £250) a year. Kelly was invited to this superlative feast. Next came the two leading violinists of the age, Jarnowick and Janiewicz (a very young man in the service of the King of Poland).

Another violinist who arrived was the eccentric Dr. John Fisher, a clever musician, but inordinately vain and talkative. " A very ugly Christian," Kelly calls him. The ways of women are ever proverbially strange, but it is particularly difficult to find a reason why the brilliant singer, Nancy Storace, then barely eighteen and with the world at her feet, should have taken the loquacious Fisher, more than twenty years her senior, for a husband. But she did, and soon bitterly regretted her choice. For, instead of harmony, there was much discord, and he knocked her about so shamefully that the matter came to the ears of the Emperor, who banished Fisher from Vienna. Her unfortunate experience temporarily affected poor Storace's voice, and when the Duke of York (second son of King George III) arrived in Vienna in 1784 her misfortune was fully apparent. The Royal visitor, together with the Emperor and his brother, the Archbishop of Cologne, attended a gala at the theatre, when a new opera by Stephen Storace was produced, with his sister and Kelly in the principal parts. In the middle of the first act, Nancy Storace suddenly lost her voice, and could not utter a sound. The contretemps threw the performance into confusion, and Kelly adds, " I shall never forget her despair and disappointment, but she was not then prepared for the extent of her misfortune, for she did not recover her voice sufficiently to appear on the stage for five months."

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[1] Several of the songs in *L'Enlèvement du Serail* were written by Mozart specially to suit the florid compass and range of high notes exhibited by his sister-in-law, Madame Lange (sister of Constance Weber). Madame Lange was one of the most brilliant *bravura* singers of the time, and at this date was the prima donna of the company of singers in German at the Cantatore Theatre, Vienna.

Kelly, who always saw the Royal Family through rose-coloured glasses, relates of the young Duke of York in Vienna:

" On his entry into the city, he was received by the populace with acclamations, and welcomed by brilliant fêtes and rejoicings. The condescension and kindness, for which His Royal Highness ever has been distinguished, thus early gained him the hearts of all ranks of society; he was in his one and twentieth year, and allowed to be a model of manly beauty. I have often seen him walking in the streets of Vienna dressed in the Windsor uniform, with his hair platted behind, attended by one or two of his *aides-de-camp*, visiting the different shops, and conversing with the most amiable familiarity with the concourse of people that flocked around him. The Emperor paid him great and marked attention."[1]

Musical talent was highly regarded in Vienna, but for some strange reason the Court and Kelly did not appreciate the Baron Bach,[1] and laughed at his self-confident genius :

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[1] A few years later Kelly must have been delighted at the tribute paid to the egregious Duke of York in the epilogue to *The Rival Sisters*, spoken by Mrs. Siddons at the Haymarket Theatre on March 18th, 1793, when, after an allusion to the " fashionable vices " of the gilded youth of London, the said youths were urged to seek fame and death on the ocean and the vasty fields of France:

But now the times a nobler plea may yield—
A war invites you—arm, and take the field.
The sons of France would fain subvert our laws;
Go forth the champions of your country's cause.
Behold the bright example of the day;
Go—where our Royal Frederick leads the way:
So Albion's liberties shall better stand,
And KING, *and* LORDS, *and* COMMONS, *guard the land.*

Unfortunately, " the bright example of the day," the Duke of York, who commanded the British troops in Holland, was defeated at Bois-le-Duc.

" The Apollo, the Orpheus of the age, was the redoubted and renowned Baron Bach, who came to Vienna to be heard by the Emperor. He, in his own conceit, surpassed Tartini, Nardini, etc. This *fanatico per la musica* had just arrived from Petersburg, where he went to make his extraordinary talents known to the Royal Family and Court. Now I have often heard this man play, and I positively declare that his performance was as bad as any blind fiddler's at a wake in a country town in Ireland ; but he was a man of immense fortune, and kept open house. In every city which he passed through, he gave grand dinners, to which all the musical professors were invited ; at Vienna, myself among the rest. One day, having a mind to put his vanity to the test, I told him that he reminded me of the elder Cramer. He seemed rather disappointed than pleased with my praise : he acknowledged Cramer had one merit, that he had played with him out of the same book at Mannheim, where Cramer was first violin at that Court ; but that the Elector had said *his* tone was far beyond Cramer's, for Cramer was tame and slothful, and *he* was all fire and spirit, and that to make a comparison between them would be to compare a dove to a game-cock. In my life, I never knew a man who snuffed up the air of praise like this discordant idiot. After he had been heard by the Emperor (who laughed heartily at him), he set off for London, in order that the King of England might have an opportunity of hearing his dulcet strains."

An absurd episode occurred about this time at the Imperial Theatre. There had arrived in Vienna a certain Italian named Botterelli, who said that he was the poet of the King's Theatre in London, and that his wife, an Englishwoman, was a principal singer at Vauxhall, Ranelagh, and the Pantheon. She desired to sing before the Emperor, with the view of obtaining an engagement at his theatre. As she had letters of introduction to the greatest of the Viennese nobility, and Prince Charles Liechtenstein granted her his protection, a grand concert was arranged, without rehearsal, when the Emperor was present. At the end of the first part, the lovely siren was led into the orchestra by her husband, the orchestra itself being on the stage, and took up her position just under the Emperor's box. Kelly was ready to accompany her on the pianoforte, and the audience waited in mute and breathless expectation, wondering whether she would melt their ears with a fine cantabile, or overwhelm them with a brilliant bravura. The opening chords were struck, and the singer—to the dismay and utter astonishment of the distinguished audience—bawled out, without feeling or mercy, voice or time, or one note in tune, the hunting-song of *Tally-ho*. She continued shouting out "Tally-ho, tally-ho," in a manner so loud and dissonant, that the audience jumped up terrified; some shrieked with alarm, others hissed, some hooted, and many joined in the mysterious yell, in order to propitiate the supposed mad woman. The Emperor summoned Kelly to him, and asked him what "Tally-ho" meant? The youth replied that he did not know (which, he says, literally at *that* time he did *not*). His Majesty, finding that even a native of Great Britain could not explain the meaning of the insulting words, retired from the theatre in great indignation, and most of the audience, convinced by the Imperial flight that the words bore some horrible meaning, hastened to follow the Emperor's example. The ladies hid their faces with their fans, and mothers were heard in the lobbies warning their daughters never to repeat the dreadful expression of "Tally-ho," nor venture to ask anyone for a translation of the vile phrase. The next day the lady's husband abused to Kelly the taste of Vienna, and said that the song which they did not know how to appreciate was the rage of Vauxhall, where it had been sung by the celebrated Mrs. Wrighten, and was now a great favourite all over England. Thus, however, ended the exposition of English taste in Vienna, and the Signora Tally-ho, with her Italian poet, went hunting elsewhere, and returned no more to the Austrian capital.

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[1] Doctor C. Sanford Terry informs me that Baron Bach was not related to the famous J. S. Bach, although it is a curious fact that Mozart alludes to J. C. Bach, the youngest son of J. S. Bach, as " Baron " Bach ; but this J. C. Bach died in London in 1782, some time before the Baron described by Kelly arrived there.

A better example of English talent was soon forthcoming in Stephen Storace's opera *Gli Equivoci*, based on Shakspere's *Comedy of Errors*, wherein Kelly played Antipholus of Ephesus.[1]

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[1] Kelly states that *Gli Equivoci* became the rage, and that Storace's music was beyond description beautiful. Many years later, two of the numbers, "Hope a

The piece was adapted as an Italian opera by the poet of the theatre, the Abbé da Ponte—a well-known figure in the theatrical world, but only a dubious ornament to the Church. He had marked eccentric characteristics—a remarkably awkward gait, a habit of throwing himself (as he thought) into a graceful attitude by putting his stick behind his back and leaning on it; he also dressed in a very dandyish manner, for he was mighty pleased with himself, and was a consummate coxcomb; and further, had a strong lisp and a broad Venetian accent. In Salieri's opera, *Le parola dopo la musica* (the words by Casti), produced in February, 1786, at the Schoenbrunn theatre, there was the character of an amorous, eccentric poet, played by Kelly, who in those days was an excellent mimic of gait, countenance, and voice. On the first night the Emperor was present, and the Abbé da Ponte was seated conspicuously in the boxes—more visible than he need have been. When Kelly made his *entrée* as the amorous poet, he was seen to be dressed exactly in the costume of the Abbé in the boxes, imitating his walk, leaning on his stick, and aping his gestures and his lisp. There was an immediate roar of applause and loud laughter; and, after a buzz of whisper round the house, the eyes of the whole assembly turned to the place where the Abbé was seated. The Emperor, too, enjoyed the audacious joke, laughed heartily, and frequently applauded. The Abbé da Ponte was in no way affronted; he appreciated this additional publicity, and took the imitation of himself in very good part.

Lorenzo Da Ponte was born of Jewish parents in the Ghetto of Ceneda, Treviso, on March 10th, 1749. He entered the Roman Catholic priesthood, and became notorious as a licentious Abbé in Venice during the years 1776–9. He was expelled from that city by reason of his relations with a married woman named Bellaudi, in the house of whose mother he lodged. Da Ponte came to Vienna as poet to the Italian Opera Theatre of the Emperor Joseph II, and as such wrote the libretto for Mozart's opera, *Le Nozze di Figaro* (based on Beaumarchais's

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Distant Joy Disclosing" and "Knocking at This Time of Day," were introduced in Prince Hoare's piece, *No Song, No Supper*, at Drury Lane; and in *The Pirates*, at the same theatre, Michael Kelly sang two songs which he had originally sung in the *Equivoci* at Vienna. "Storace certainly enriched his English pieces, but I lamented to see his beautiful Italian opera dismantled." See later, pp. 175 and 210.

comedy, *Le Mariage de Figaro*), which was produced on May 1st, 1786, at the Viennese Court Theatre, and performed on nine occasions. His excellent libretto for the same composer's *Don Giovanni* appeared in the following year, 1787.

In 1792, and again in 1794, Da Ponte came to London in the hope of obtaining the post of poet and librettist at Drury Lane Theatre, and for this purpose solicited the aid of his old acquaintances in Vienna, Stephen Storace and Michael Kelly, who (as will be seen later) were both prominent at that date in the affairs of the Opera. However, Badini was appointed to the post ; and, as Da Ponte's offer to supply two libretti a year was not accepted either, he was furious and resolved to revenge himself upon Storace and Kelly, as he told Casanova, " to have these gentleman understand they have made a big mistake in treating me in this way." His plan was to issue a periodical called *La Bilancia Musicale*, wherein the musical and operatic productions of his former friends would be ridiculed and vilified. But, as no subscriptions to the publication materialised, the amiable project proved abortive. Da Ponte was, however, very kindly treated by William Taylor, the operatic impresario, who gave him work at the King's Theatre, and, apparently, was responsible for the staging in London of two of Da Ponte's libretti for operas by Martini, *La Capricciosa Correta*, 1794, and *L'Isola del Piacere*, 1795 ; the composer's *La Scuola de Maritati* is also mentioned this year. It was Taylor who did that kindly act to Da Ponte by giving him £100 to go to Italy and engage some singers in 1798, when the poet saw his aged father in Ceneda, and revisited Venice and Vienna. Da Ponte eventually went to America, and there in his old age he heard the great vocalists of a later generation, Malibran and Garcia, sing " my " *Don Giovanni*. Da Ponte died on August 17th, 1838, at the age of eighty-nine, in New York, far from the romantic lands of his youth. His remarkable career can be read in an English translation of his *Memoirs*, published in 1929.

His talent for mimicry was now to stand Kelly in good service. It chanced that there arrived in Vienna at this time both the celebrated Paisiello and the poet Casti. Giovanni Paisiello (1741–1816), a native of Tarento, was the most prolific of opera composers, for he produced nearly fifty in the space of thirteen years. In 1776, he entered the service of Catherine II of Russia, where he remained for nine years. During this period he composed his opera *Barbiere di Siviglia.* The Empress had a great regard for him, and Paisiello told Kelly that one morning, when he was accompanying her at a music lesson, he shuddered with cold, for it was the extreme of winter. Her Majesty, perceiving this, took off a beautiful cloak, ornamented with brilliant clasps of great value, which she was wearing, and threw it over his shoulders. Paisiello also told Kelly another instance of the Empress Catherine's esteem for him in connection with an assault by Marshal Beloselsky. The Marshal, agitated it is believed by the " green-eyed monster," forgot himself so far as to give Paisiello a blow. Paisiello, who was a powerful, athletic man, gave him a sound drubbing. In return, the Marshal laid his complaint before the Empress, and demanded from Her Majesty the immediate dismissal of Paisiello from the Court for having had the audacity to return a blow upon a marshal of the Russian Empire. Catherine's reply was, " I neither can nor will attend to your request. You forgot your dignity when you gave an unoffending man and a great artist a blow. Are you surprised that he should have forgotten it too? And as to rank, it is in my power, sir, to make fifty marshals, but not one Paisiello." Paisiello was an accomplished man in every way, and acquainted with all branches of literature. His music was characterised by pathos and tenderness, and a quarter of a century after his death he was described as a melodist " without superior." His airs, " Hope Told a Flattering Tale " and " For Tenderness Formed," were universally popular, though I suppose it is no longer the case that they " will for ever be known in every corner of the world where European arts are cultivated." Giovan Batista Casti (1721–1803) was born in the Roman State. His three hundred sonnets, entitled *I Tré Giuli*, appeared in 1762. Like Paisiello, he was at the Court of Catherine II during the seventh decade of the century, and his *Poema Tartaro* is a satire on that Empress and her courtiers under disguised names. On reaching Vienna, he obtained the post of Poeta Cesareo, vacant since the death of Metastasio in 1782. Casti's chief fame accrues from his later work, the satirical *Animali Parlanti* (1802) and *Novelle Galanti* (1804), the last, stories in the style of Boccaccio, which place Casti among the few indecent Italian writers of the eighteenth century.

When the Emperor heard of the presence in Vienna of both Paisiello and Casti, he directed that they should be presented to him at the same time, by his Great Chamberlain, at the first levee. Then, with his usual gracious tact, he said, "I think I may say, I have now before me two of the greatest geniuses alive, and it would be most gratifying to me to have an opera, the joint production of both, performed at my theatre." The flattering command was, of course, obeyed, and in a short time Casti wrote *Il Re Teodoro a Venezia* (said to be a satire on the King of Sweden, Gustavus III), and the music was duly composed by Paisiello.[1] The chief rôles were assigned to Signora Storace, Viganoni, Bennuci, and Mandini. The most marked character part, that of Gafferio, the King's secretary, an avowed satire on General Paoli, remained as yet unfilled, for Casti could not find a satisfactory actor for the impersonation; so it was decided to send to Venice and engage the renowned Signor Blasi to come and play the part at any price. Pending this arrangement, Stephen Storace gave a little musical party to his friends, and it was a very memorable evening for those who were so fortunate as to be present, for a quartet performed in this wise:

First Violin . . .	*Haydn.*
Second Violin . . .	*Baron Dittersdorf.*
Violincello	*Wanhal.*
Tenor	*Mozart.*

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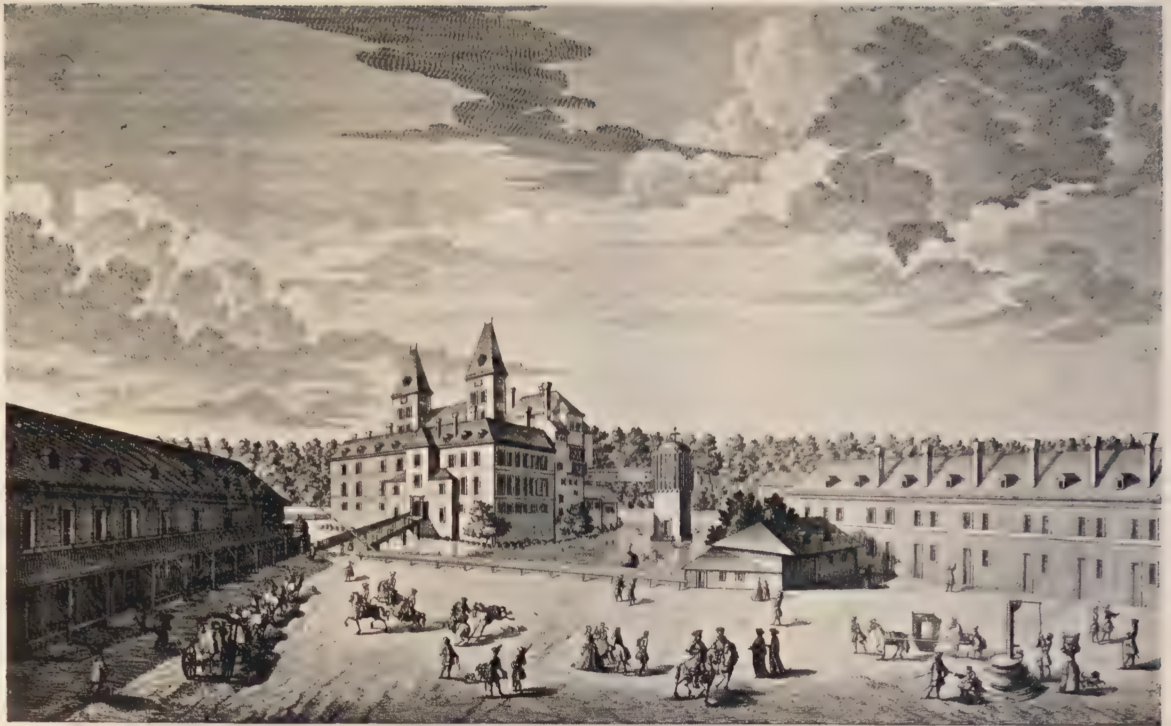
[1] *Il Re Teodoro a Venezia* was later (1787) produced in London, with Storace in her original part. Horace Walpole writes on December 16th, 1787: "I have been once at the Opera, and was tired to death. . . . The learned call the music good, but there is nothing to show the humour and action of the Storace and Morelli. I bought the book to read at home, because the Emperor paid £1,000 for the piece as a satire on the King of Sweden—how, the Lord knows. The plot is taken from Voltaire's deposed kings at Venice in his *Candide*, of whom only two are introduced, King Theodore and Sultan Achmet. The words are ten times stupider than our operas generally are: nor do I yet know that the King of Sweden, to whom I am no more partial than Cæsar is, was ever deposed. In short, if it is a satire on any mortal, it is one on Cæsar himself, for having paid so dear for such unintelligible nonsense." In the index volume (XVI) of the Toynbee Edition of *The Letters of Horace Walpole*, this reference to Anna Storace is incorrectly amplified to "appears in *Gli Schiavi per Amore*." Storace appeared in the latter opera on the occasion of her début in London, April 24th, 1787. See later, p. 149.

Truly there were giants on the earth in those days. Later in the evening the rest of the company contributed to the entertainment of Storace's principal guests, Paisiello and Casti. Storace asked Kelly to sing the Canzonetta, whereby hangs a tale. There was an old miser of Vienna, named Varesi, who denied himself the very necessaries of life, and who obtained his meals by pilfering fruits and sweets from the parties to which he was invited ; the Canzonetta, for which Storace asked, was sung by the miser with a tremulous voice, accompanied by extraordinary gestures and a pathetic shake of the head. It was an imitation, in fact, that Kelly was called upon to exhibit, and he did it with his particular gift for mimicry. During his performance, he perceived Casti studying him attentively, and at the close the poet turned to Paisiello, and said : " This is the very fellow to act the character of Gafferio in our opera ; this boy shall be our old man, and, if he keeps old Varesi in his eye when he acts it, I will answer for his success."

So it was arranged. The opera was brought out with immense success, for the music was pronounced to be the *chef d'œuvre* of Paisiello. Overflowing houses for three successive seasons testified to its merits. Kelly, though still a boy, played the old man with uncanny skill, and after the first performance the Emperor signified, through his Chamberlain, Prince Rosenberg, that he was so pleased with Kelly's performance in this part that he ordered an addition to his salary of one hundred zecchinos (£50) per annum. Wherever he went, he was now known as " Old Gafferio." Paisiello was particularly kind to Kelly, and much diverted by the youth's monkey antics both in private and in *Il Re Teodoro :*

" The song in Old Gafferio's part, which I may say was the lucky star of my professional career, strange as it may appear, I had the folly to refuse to sing (at first), thinking it too trivial for me. I sent it back to Paisiello ; he desired to see me. I went —and he played me the beautiful accompaniment for it which he had written, but which was not sent me, I having only received the voice part. When I was going away, this great man gave me a gentle admonition, not to judge of things rashly ; a piece of advice not thrown away upon me."

For the summer months the Imperial Court removed to the



LAXENBURGUM, trium horarum intervallo Vienna distans amœniſsima arx, in qua S. Cæs. Rom. et Regiæ Cathol. Majestas verno tempore divertere solet.

Laxenburg ein drey Stund von Wien gelegenes Luſt Schloß auf welchem Ihro Röm. Keyſerl. und Königl. Catholiſche Maj. Sich zur Frühlings Zeit zu divertiren pflegt.

THE PALACE OF LAXEMBURG, NEAR VIENNA

Palace of Laxemburg, a few miles from Vienna. It was surrounded by forests abounding in all kinds of game, and a beautiful park and extensive gardens. Here, too, was a theatre, and all the neighbouring tenantry had free admission to the performances. The members of the Italian Opera Company were housed in as luxurious a manner as in the capital. Each performer had separate apartments allotted to him, and his breakfast served there. The company dined together in a magnificent saloon on every delicacy of the season, with the rarest wines, fruits, and ices. And then, after the opera, an equally excellent supper. During the day the singers could amuse themselves as they chose. The Emperor was always solicitous for their comfort and entertainment : those were the golden days of singers :

"The Emperor and his Court went often in chase of the *airone*[1] bird, an amusement he was very partial to. Prince Dietrichstein,[2] the Master of the Horse, was very friendly to Signora Storace, and did her the kindness to send her one of the court barouches to view the chase. I always accompanied her on these excursions. One day the Emperor rode up to our carriage on horseback, and asked us if we were amused, and if he could do anything for us. Storace, with her peculiar characteristic bluntness, said, 'Why, sir, I am very thirsty. Will Your Majesty be so good as to order me a glass of water?' The Emperor, with his usual affability, smiled, called to one of his attendants to grant the request, and the glass of water was brought.

"I have another instance to record of the condescension and urbanity of the Emperor. He one day reviewed twenty thousand of his finest troops : it was a glorious sight, and one that I shall never forget. Signora Storace, her mother, Bennuci, and myself, were on the ground at six o'clock in our barouche. The Emperor, who had a very military appearance, was surrounded by his staff, and accompanied by his nephew and heir, Grand Marshals Prince De Ligne, Prince Charles Liechtenstein, Prince Schwarzenberg, and Prince Lobkowitz. Marshals Lacy's and Laudon's regiments were on the ground, as well as some fine Hungarian regiments and the Emperor's Hungarian and Polish Guards, who made a magnificent appearance. To me it was enchantment. Our barouche was within view of the Emperor ; and he sent one of his aides-de-camp to us, to order the carriage to be drawn up nearer to himself.

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[1] Heron.

[2] See *ante*, p. 92.

" At the close of the review, he rode up to us and said, ' Has not this been a fine sight ? ' And when General O'Kavanagh's regiment passed before him, with their colonel at their head, he condescended to say to me, ' Look there, O'Kelly ; look, there goes your countryman O'Kavanagh, and a fine soldier he is ! ' I never spent a more delightful day than this, which never has been effaced from my recollection.

" Three delicious months did we pass at Laxemburg, living in luxury and pleasure ; at the end of which the Emperor returned to Vienna, and we received orders to follow him."

Kelly had a brief experience of the prevailing gambling mania in Vienna, which he thus narrates :

" At the Ridotto Rooms there was some play going forward. I never, in the course of my life, had been addicted to that fashionable amusement, but on that unlucky evening rebellion lay in my way and I found it. I lost forty zecchinos to a gallant English Colonel. I had only twenty about me, which I paid, and promised to pay the other twenty in the course of the week. I went home to bed repenting of my folly. In the morning Nancy Storace called on me. ' So, sir,' said she, ' I hear you were gambling last night, and not only lost all the money you had about you, but are still in debt. Such debts ought not to be left unsatisfied a moment ; you may one day or other go to England, and, should the transaction of your playing for more money than you possessed become known among Englishmen, it might give you a character which I know you do not deserve. It must be settled directly. She instantly produced the money and made me go and discharge the obligation. Such an act of well-timed disinterested friendship was noble, and never has been forgotten by me."

The season of 1785–86 in Vienna proved to be of exceptional brilliance, for the Elector-Palatine Charles Theodore of Bavaria and the Duc de Deux-Ponts[1] came, with immense retinues, to visit the Emperor ; he, in their honour, decided to produce two operas by Christoph Gluck (1714–87), who had just returned to

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[1] Deux-Ponts, now known as Zweibrücken, was formerly a duchy, but is now merged in Bavaria. The ruling Prince, who came to Vienna in 1785, was a member of the House of Birkenfeld, from which family also the later Kings of Bavaria were descended.

Vienna after a sensational period in Paris, where his operatic style in music as opposed to the luscious methods of the Italian Piccini had aroused an intellectual warfare among the French literati, so much so that the phrase " Etes-vous Gluckiste ou Picciniste ? " became a figure of speech. One of his pupils had been Marie Antoinette, and her brother, the Emperor Joseph II, commanded *L'Iphigenia in Tauride* and *L'Alceste* to be produced in Vienna regardless of cost, and under the personal direction of the composer, who had retired possessed of a splendid fortune and adulated by all classes.

L'Iphigenia in Tauride was chosen as the first opera, and Gluck superintended the rehearsals, wearing his powdered wig, and carrying a gold-headed cane. He assigned the title-rôle to Madame Berasconi, Orestes to the celebrated tenor, Ademberger, and Pylades to Kelly—to the great envy of other members of the company who thought themselves better entitled to the part : however, he was chosen by Gluck, who coached him in the rôle. One morning, after they had been thus studying, Gluck said, " Follow me upstairs, sir, and I will introduce you to one whom, all my life, I have made my study, and endeavoured to imitate." Kelly went into Gluck's bedroom, and opposite to the head of the bed saw a full-length picture of Handel, in a fine frame. " There, sir," said Gluck, " is the portrait of the inspired master of our art ; when I open my eyes in the morning, I look upon him with reverential awe, and acknowledge him as such, and the highest praise is due to your country for having distinguished and cherished his gigantic genius." Such a tribute from one master to another is memorable, and Gluck, as Dr. Burney truly said, was the Michael Angelo of composers, " the simplifying musician," and, he might have added, a painter in terms of music, and entirely original in his melodies.

Gluck's *Alceste* was, in turn, produced with a magnificence and splendour worthy of the Imperial Court. Next, Paisiello's *Barbiere di Siviglia* was sung for the first time in Vienna ; Nancy Storace created there the part of Rosina, while Kelly and Mandini sang alternately as Almaviva. Following this, three other composers were in commission to produce a new opera—Mozart, Regini, and Salieri. There was much jealousy, and each sought the *pas* in production. Cabals were formed by members of the Opera Company, and all manner of Court stairs influences and intrigues were at work. Mozart was as touchy as gunpowder,[1] and swore he would put the score of his opera on the fire if it was not produced first. Kelly was the only member of the company who supported his claim, and the Emperor rightly decided in favour of Mozart, whom he had specially commissioned to write a new opera, and perhaps he foresaw that it was to be immortal—*Le Nozze di Figaro.* The story was adapted, of course, from Beaumarchais's comedy *Le Mariage de Figaro*, and the version for Mozart's opera was very well done by the Abbé da Ponte, before mentioned.[2] It was ever a matter of professional pride to Kelly that he created the parts of Don Basilio, and the stuttering judge, Don Curzio, in the original production of *Le Nozze di Figaro* at Vienna on May 1st, 1786. He was twenty-three at the time, and, writing nearly forty years afterwards, he said :

" Of all the performers in this opera at that time, but one survives—myself. It was allowed that never was opera stronger cast. I have seen it performed at different periods in other countries, and well too, but no more to compare with its original performance than light is to darkness. All the original performers had the advantage of the instruction of the composer, who transfused into their minds his inspired meaning. I shall never forget his little animated countenance when lighted up with the glowing rays of genius : it is as impossible to describe it as it would be to paint sunbeams.

" I called on him one evening ; he said to me, ' I have just finished a little duet for my opera ; you shall hear it.' He sat down to the piano, and we sang it. I was delighted with it, and the musical world will give me credit for being so, when I mention the duet, ' Crudele perchè finora farmi languire cosí.' A more delicious *morceau* never was penned by man, and it has often been a source of pleasure to me to have been the first to have heard it, and to have sung it with its greatly gifted composer.

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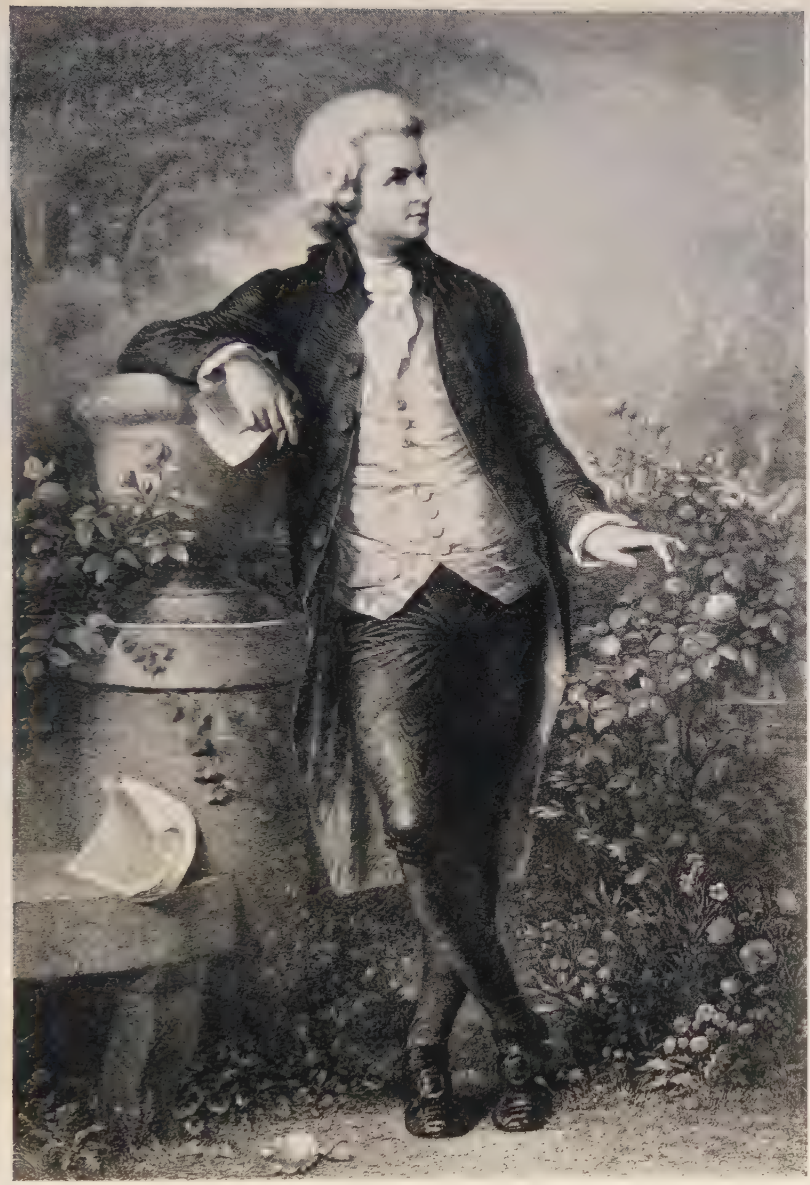
[1] It was Mozart who told Kelly how on one occasion the Emperor Joseph I said to him : " Mozart, I like your music very much, but there are too many notes in Madame Lange's song." " Sire," replied the composer, " there are just as many notes in it as there ought to be."

[2] See *ante*, pp. 104–105.



MOZART

The music-score on the bench is that of *Figaro*

"I remember at the first rehearsal of the full band, Mozart was on the stage with his crimson pelisse and gold-laced cocked-hat, giving the time of the music to the orchestra. Figaro's song, 'Non più andrai, farfallone amoroso,' Bennuci gave with the greatest animation and power of voice. I was standing close to Mozart, who, *sotto voce*, was repeating, 'Bravo! Bravo! Bennuci'; and when Bennuci came to the fine passage, 'Cherubino, alla vittoria, alla gloria militar,' which he gave out with stentorian lungs, the effect was electricity itself, for the whole of the performers on the stage, and those in the orchestra, as if actuated by one feeling of delight, vociferated 'Bravo! Bravo! Maestro! Viva, viva, grande Mozart.' Those in the orchestra I thought would never have ceased applauding, by beating the bows of their violins against the music-desks. The little man acknowledged, by repeated obeisances, his thanks for the distinguished mark of enthusiastic applause bestowed upon him.

"The same meed of approbation was given to the finale at the end of the first act; that piece of music alone, in my humble opinion, if he had never composed anything else good, would have stamped him as the greatest master of his art. In the *sestetto*, in the second act, which was Mozart's favourite piece of the whole opera, I had a very conspicuous part as the Stuttering Judge.[1] All through the piece I was to stutter; but in the *sestetto* Mozart requested I would not, for, if I did, I should spoil his music. I told him, that although it might appear very presumptuous in a lad like me to differ with him on this point, I *did*, and was sure the way in which I intended to introduce the stuttering would not interfere with the other parts, but produce an effect; besides, it certainly was not in nature that I should stutter all through the part, and when I came to the *sestetto* speak plain; and, after that piece of music was over, return to stuttering; and I added (apologising, at the same time, for my apparent want of deference and respect in placing my opinion in opposition to that of the great Mozart) that unless I was allowed to perform the part as I wished, I would not perform it at all.

"Mozart at last consented that I should have my own way, but doubted the success of the experiment. Crowded houses proved that nothing ever on the stage produced a more powerful effect; the audience were convulsed with laughter, in which Mozart himself joined. The Emperor repeatedly cried out 'Bravo!' and the piece was loudly applauded and encored. When the opera was over, Mozart came on the stage to me, and, shaking me by both hands, said, 'Bravo! young man; I feel obliged to you; and acknowledge you to have been in the right, and myself in the wrong.' There was certainly a risk run, but I felt within myself I could give the effect I wished, and the event proved that I was not mistaken.

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[1] In later revivals of this opera apparently a good deal of the music and dialogue is omitted, particularly in the part of Don Curzio, the stuttering lawyer, who no longer has a place in the *sestetto* of the second act. Also Basilio's song in Act IV. is now generally cut out.

"I have seen the opera in London and elsewhere, and never saw the judge portrayed as a stutterer, and the scene was often totally omitted. I played it as a stupid old man, though at the time I was a beardless stripling. At the end of the opera, I thought the audience would never have done applauding and calling for Mozart; almost every piece was encored, which prolonged it nearly to the length of two operas, and induced the Emperor to issue an order on the second representation that no piece of music should be encored. Never was anything more complete than the triumph of Mozart, and his *Nozze di Figaro*, to which numerous overflowing audiences bore witness."

With the exception of Bennuci as Figaro, Kelly does not mention the names of the other members of the original cast of *Le Nozze di Figaro:*

Count Almaviva	*Stefano Mandini*
Countess Rosina	*Signora Laschi*
Cherubino	*Signora Bussani*
Bartolo	*Francesco Bussani*
Marcellina	*Signora Mandini*
Susanna	*Anna Storace*

The piquant, arch, yet sensuous style of Anna Storace was eminently suited to the part of Susanna, and her characteristics were probably in the minds of Mozart and Da Ponte when at work on the opera. As chief vocalist of the Imperial Theatre, her salary was £500 a year, then regarded as an enormous one, with free board, lodgings, wax candles, and carriages, in addition.

Bussani, as Cherubino, was the first of the fortunate pages to sing that most lovely of all Mozart's songs, " Voi, che sapete," which has in its haunting melody all the grace and plaintive romance of the artificial love-making of the eighteenth century in masks and moonlight. The Rosina, Signora Laschi, later, as Frau Mombelli, sang as Zerlina in Mozart's *Don Giovanni*, 1787. As Michael Kelly doubled the two parts of Basilio and Curzio, when the action required the presence of both on the stage at the same time, an understudy walked on while Kelly sang the music of the other character. Jahn says : " Mozart was fortunate with his singers. . . . Kelly was a very many-sided tenor, who had a great success in serious and comic parts, besides being a splendid actor." In the accounts of *Figaro*, when produced at Vienna, Kelly's name is sometimes incorrectly spelt as " Ochelley." The Emperor always called him " O'Kelly."

Kelly continues his narrative of the opera in Vienna : " One morning, while we were rehearsing in the grand saloon of the palace, His Majesty, accompanied by Prince Rosenberg, entered the saloon, and, addressing himself to Storace, Mandini, and Bennuci, said, ' I dare say you are all pleased that I have desired there shall be no more encores. To have your songs so often repeated must be a great fatigue and very distressing to you.' Storace replied, 'It is indeed, Sir, very distressing ; very much so ' ; the other two bowed, as if they were of the same opinion. I was close to His Majesty, and said boldly to him, ' Do not believe them, Sire. They all like to be encored, at least I am sure I always do.' His Majesty laughed, and I believe he thought there was more truth in my assertion than in theirs. I am sure there was."

Kelly was a privileged young man, and a favourite with the Emperor always. On one occasion when he had an audience with the Emperor at Schoenbrunn, there were also present some of the distinguished Irish Generals in the Austrian service, such as O'Donnell and Kavanagh. The latter said a few words to Kelly in the Irish language, which he did not understand. The Emperor turned quickly to the young actor and asked : " What is this, O'Kelly, don't you speak the language of your own country ? " To which Kelly replied, " Please, Your Majesty, none but the lower orders of Irish people speak the Irish language."

The Emperor laughed loudly at the ill-timed jest. Kelly had come to seek leave of absence, in order to visit his mother, who was in a failing state of health; and, as Stephen Storace had just arrived with an engagement from London for his sister at the Opera House there, he decided he would travel to England with his friends.

Kelly asked for six months' leave, and the Emperor replied, "That will not be sufficient for your purpose. Take twelve months, and your salary shall be paid to you as usual during that period. I will give the necessary orders to Count Rosenberg. Make the best use of your time and talents; accept of any engagement that may be conducive to your interests, and, if you do not better yourself, come back to my theatre, and you shall be received." And he held out his hand to be kissed.

As it turned out, Kelly was destined never to return, and the Emperor was dead before three years had elapsed. Whatever his faults, Joseph II could do things in the Grand Manner; and, although Horace Walpole (who disliked him) said he could scarcely "believe that His Imperial Rapacity loves the arts better than money," this work has demonstrated how lavish he was in support of music and musicians. Such a ruler, even if an autocrat and hedonist, carries out the right and stately conception of a King as the magnificent Patron of All the Arts: the "democratised" kings and princes of the present day, who take their pleasure in the form of hunting, game-shooting, tennis, or polo, and extend no patronage at all to the Arts, are rulers of an entirely different signification.

In the summer and winter of 1786–87 there were in Vienna a number of young Englishmen of high birth, all of them about twenty years of age—Lord Barnard (later the Duke of Cleveland), the Earl of Wycombe (later second Marquis of Lansdowne), Lord Belgrave (subsequently Earl Grosvenor and first Marquis of Westminster), the Earl of Crawford, Lord Dungarvan (later the Earl of Cork), the Earl of Granard, Lord Strathaven (later Earl of Aboyne), Lord Carbery, Lord de Clifford, John Spencer (grandson of the third Duke of Marlborough), Captain Lennox (later the fourth Duke of Richmond), Sir John Sebright, and many others. They were extremely lively, sometimes a little too much so for the phlegmatic and more stately Austrian nobility.

The young English sparks wished to have some horse-racing, and the Emperor gave them the land they wanted for the purpose in the Prater. Accordingly the good people of Vienna were treated to the amazing spectacle of Milord Anglais turned jockey, those mentioned above particularly distinguishing themselves in prowess at what was probably a form of steeple-chasing. The Emperor ordered his Polish Guard to keep the course clear, that the riders might meet with no interruption : " everything was order and regularity, and the day passed off to the content and enjoyment of all parties." When the Carnival arrived, and was celebrated with more than uncommon splendour, with ridotto balls and ceaseless revelry, yet more British[1] visited Vienna, and, sad to relate, their high spirits got the better of the manners due in a strange land. As Kelly amusingly puts it :

" The English were particularly respected and beloved—but alas ! there were a half-dozen amongst them (who shall be nameless) who occasionally sacrificed to the jolly god, and, when heated with wine, would sally out into the street, and show a great inclination to encourage the trade of *lamp-mending*, which one night they did so effectually that they did not leave a lamp unbroken in the Graben Street, or the street adjoining. The art of lamp-smashing was not understood by the unaccomplished young men of Vienna, and great was their wonder and dismay that they should have lived so long in a state of ignorance ; but the police, not wishing to have the science cultivated amongst their countrymen, intimated to the professors of the novel art that they must pay for what they had demolished, or, upon a repetition of their valorous exploits, they should be sent to prison. . . . The Emperor was very much displeased, and had given orders that the first person found committing any breach of the peace should be put into confinement."

The young English lords and gentlemen formed a club for themselves in Vienna, and took a house in Graben Street, where they generally dined together. Kelly says he often had the honour of being invited to join them, and that the number of corks drawn was prodigious. They also frequented, after the Opera, a grocer's shop in the same street, where, it was claimed, could be had the finest champagne and hock in the country. Behind the shop was a discreet room, not open to the public, where the grocer received a chosen few : " There we always found excellent Parmesan cheese, anchovies, olives, and oysters. No tablecloth was allowed, but each person had a large piece of brown paper presented to him by way of napkin. I wish I had now in my cellar the excellent wine I have seen, during my sojourn in Vienna, drank in that room. Everything was good, except the oysters, which were somewhat of the stalest ; none could be procured nearer than Trieste, which was so far from Vienna that they never arrived sweet : but the Germans liked them just as well stale." Kelly was told an anecdote apropos of this and King George I. When His Germanic Majesty first went from Hanover to England, the Royal Purveyor, having heard that the King was very fond of oysters, sent in a dish every day ; they were the finest and freshest that could be procured, but the King did not like them. This being mentioned to one of the pages who had come over with the King from Hanover, he told the Purveyor that the King did not find the same *relishing taste* in the English oysters which he admired so much in those served to him in his native Hanover. " But endeavour," said the courtier, " to get His Majesty some that are *stale*, and you will find he will like them." The experiment was tried, and succeeded brilliantly, for His Majesty constantly ate the stale bivalves, and pronounced them delicious.

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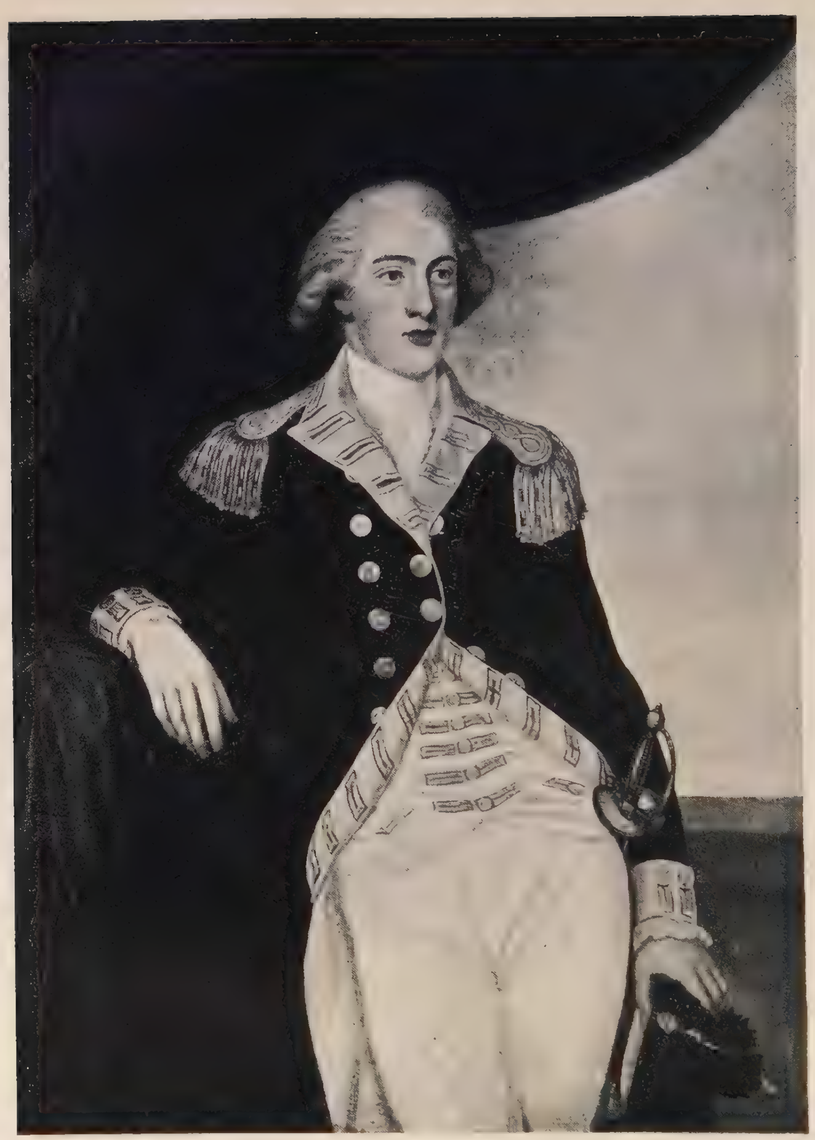
[1] Lady Craven relates in her *Memoirs* that she was told by Sir Robert Keith that he had presented upwards of four hundred members of the British nobility and gentry who had come to Vienna at this period, for the Court provided more gaiety, magnificence, fine music, and beautiful women than any other in Europe.

Kelly's narrative of life in Vienna at this date is often confirmed by the entries in the manuscript diaries of Lord Barnard, who was sojourning in the city, as mentioned by Kelly, along with many other young members of the English aristocracy. He was then twenty years of age, and the son and heir of the Earl of Darlington. Long years after, in 1833, he was created Duke of Cleveland. In Vienna he was the liveliest of the English, playing tennis every morning, in the afternoon taking part in the races in the Prater, or witnessing " Les Combats des Bêtes," or giving a *pique-nique anglais* in the woods, and in the evening attending the Opera, fêtes at the Ridotto (or the Redoute, as he calls it), or other gay functions which lasted to the morning hours. Thus in 1786 he notes :



LORD BARNARD (LATER DUKE OF CLEVELAND)

From the portrait at Raby Castle, by courtesy of Lord Barnard

May 11*th.* " Je me suis lévé à neuf heure, jouai à la Paume, dinai chez Milord Granard, allai au Ballo de Monsieur Manners, ou Je dansai jusqu'à à sept heure du matin."

May 12*th.* " Je restai au Lit toute la Journée."

July 12*th.* " Je me suis lévé à onze heure, dinai à l'Augarten ; Mr. Powlett, Mr. Morgan et Lord Strathaven ont pris du Thé avec moi ; allai à l'Opera, soupai au Casino avec Mr. Powlett, Morgan, et O'Kelly ; allai à minuit chez Milord Crawford et Captain Wale et Prince Vintimiglia, ou J'ai resté jusqu'à six heure du matin."

December 1*st.* "Lord Belgrave et moi nous sommes allé déjeuner chez le Prince Adelsberg, nous dinions au Club, et nous sommes allé au Bal et souper de l'Ambassadeur de Espagne."

February 11*th*, 1787. " Nous avions nos Courses des Chevaux au Prater, ou J'ai gagné mon grand pari, Colombine contre Alamahatamaha."

February 17*th.* " J'ai fait une course des Chevaux au Prater que J'ai gagné. J'ai diné au Club. J'ai soupé chez Madame Storace. Il fesoit très beau."

Lord Barnard had by now become enamoured with Nancy Storace, and his journal relates their constant meetings. He was a rapid young man, the great-great-grandson of King Charles II and Barbara Villiers, Lady Castlemaine and Duchess of Cleveland, so it is not surprising to find that he soon persuaded the fair opera singer to meet him alone at certain rendezvous in the gay city.

January 19*th*, 1787. " J'ai diné au Club. Je suis allé à l'opera *Il Re Teodore in Venezia*."

January 20*th.* " J'ai passé la Soirée chez Madame Storace."

January 21*st.* " J'ai soupé chez La Storace. Je l'ai amené à la Redoute, ou nous sommes resté jusqu'à à quatre heure."

January 24*th.* " Je suis allé chez La Storace. J'ai joué à la Paume. J'ai diné au Club. Je suis allé au nouvelle opera de *Democryta corretto*. J'ai soupé chez La Storace."

February 3*rd.* " J'ai donné un Bal chez moi à La Storace. Il fesoit très beau et chaud."

February 4*th.* " Je suis allé avec La Storace à la Redoute."

February 10*th.* " J'ai soupé chez La Storace. Il fesoit un Temps superb."

February 23rd. " Au Concert de Madame Storace, qui a soupé chez moi."

This was the last meeting in Vienna, for Lord Barnard departed the next morning. The further progress and end of La Storace's romance will transpire presently.

Kelly continues the account of his life in Vienna : " At this period of my life I was rather vain, and very fond of fine clothes ; indeed, my greatest expense was the decoration of my precious person. I wore every evening full-dress embroidered coats, either gold, silver, or silk. I wore two watches (as was the custom of the country), and a diamond ring on each of my little fingers ; thus decked out, I had not, of course, the least appearance of a Paddy. When sitting one evening in the Milan coffee-house, reading *The Vienna Gazette*, two gentlemen entered, and seated themselves opposite to me to take their coffee. One of them said to the other, with a most implacable Irish brogue, ' Arrah, blood and thunder ! *luke* at that fellow sitting opposite to us (meaning me). Did you ever see such a jackdaw ? ' ' Really,' answered his companion (who I perceived was an Englishman), ' the fellow does not seem to be on bad terms with himself.' '*Luke* at his long lace ruffles,' said my countryman. ' I suppose he wears ruffles to mark his gentility.'

" I continued reading my *Gazette*, but, when the *critique* upon my long lace ruffles was ended, I laid down the paper and tucked them up under the cuffs of my coat, not looking at the gentlemen, or seeming to take any notice of them. ' But now, do *luke*,' continued the persevering brogueneer ; ' what a display he is making of his rings. I suppose he thinks he will dazzle our eyes a bit.' Upon this, I deliberately took off my rings, and put them in my pocket. At the same time, fixing a steady look at my critics, I told them, in English, that ' if there were any other part of my dress at all disagreeable to them, I should have the greatest pleasure in altering it in any way they might suggest.'

" The Irishman, improbable as it may appear, blushed, and the Englishman said he hoped I would not feel an offence where none was meant. I said, ' Certainly not,' and, to prove my sincerity, requested them to take part of a bowl of punch, and drink our Sovereign King George's health, and towards our better acquaintance ; and thus, in despite of laced ruffles and diamond rings, we introduced ourselves to one another. My Irish friend, I found, was a Dr. O'Rourke, from the county of Down, who had only the day before arrived from Prague, where he had been for many years a medical practitioner; and in my new English acquaintance I had the pleasure to find the eccentric 'walking' Stewart,[1] so named from having walked almost all over the world, and whose pedestrian exploits were universally spoken of. Stewart, though a great oddity, was a well-informed, accomplished man; a true lover of the arts and sciences, and of a most retentive memory. The last little walk he had taken was from Calais, through France, Italy, and the Tyrol, to Vienna, and in a few days he was going to extend it to as far as Constantinople. He was partial to most things in England, except the climate. He said, 'Sir, I am perfectly of opinion, with Addison, that in Nature there is nothing more inconstant than the British climate, except the humour of its inhabitants.' He was a great enthusiast about music, although not about beef-steaks; for of the most tender, and dressed in Monsieur Villar's best manner *à l'Anglaise*, he would not touch a morsel; he lived entirely upon vegetables; but my friend, the Irish Doctor, was in truth a beef-eater. In a few days, Stewart left us to take his sauntering walk to Constantinople, and I very much regretted the loss of his society."

In Vienna, Kelly attended the musical parties of Martinetz[2] and his sister, a learned and blue lady, who had received the honour of Dottoressa from the Colleges of Bologna and Pavia. The great Italian poet Metastasio, the Imperial Laureate, had lived in their house for over fifty years, and died there in 1782. At one of these parties, Kelly was introduced to Mrs. Piozzi, who, with her husband, was travelling on the Continent, and he says, " There appeared to me a great similarity in the manners of these two gifted women, who conversed with all around them without pedantry or affectation. It was certainly an epoch not to be forgotten, to have had the good fortune, on the same evening, to be in company with the favourites of Metastasio and Johnson, and last, not least, with Mozart himself." Mozart was a constant attendant at the parties of Madame Martinetz, and played duets, of his own composition, with her on the pianoforte. But these memorable days in Vienna, for Kelly, draw to a close.

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[1] John Stewart (1749–1822), known as "Walking Stewart," was a refractory school-boy at Harrow and Charterhouse. He went to India and had many adventures, serving as general to Hyder Ali, and escaped wounded. He became Prime Minister of the Nabob of Arcot. He travelled, mainly by walking, through Persia, Ethiopia, Abyssinia, and back through the Arabian desert, and then to France and Spain. He walked in America in 1791. Stewart lectured in London in 1803, and published his *Travels to Discover the Source of Moral Motion* about 1789. He died in Northumberland Street, Strand. His portrait, by T. T. C. Kendrick, will be found in *The Life and Adventures of the Celebrated Walking Stewart*, by a Relative, 1822.

[2] Metastasio bequeathed his furniture, fine library, and over 100,000 florins to Martinetz.

A short time before he left Vienna, Michael Kelly had another semi-amatory if ungallant (in the pugnacious sense of the word) adventure, somewhat resembling his earlier escape at Brescia. Thus he relates the Viennese experience :

" A young Bohemian officer, of high rank in the Imperial service, chose to take it into his head that I had supplanted him in the affections of the Countess of S——. Though I assured him to the contrary, he did everything in his power to degrade and injure me. He condescended to have me watched, go where I would ; and even bribed my own servant to betray my secrets. Heedless of menaces and threats, however, I went my own way.

" One night, after having played the part of Cavalier in Paisiello's opera of *La Frascatana*, I slipt off my coat, keeping on the rest of my theatrical dress, threw my pelisse over me, and went to supper at the house of a friend. The opera finished at a later hour than usual, and the entertainment at my friend's house was prolonged till between four and five in the morning. At the time I set out to return, it was rather dark, but I could perceive two men following me ; when I was turning round the Italian Street, they came behind me, and pushed me against a wall. They were muffled up in cloaks ; in one of them I recognised Count U——, and in the other, his companion, Baron S——, an officer in the same regiment. I asked them to let me pass, in the Emperor's name, in whose service I was, as well as themselves. The reply was, ' No, scoundrel ! until you confess the justice of my suspicions, you shall not escape me with life.' I firmly persisted in not having the slightest knowledge of the lady in question. The Baron said, ' You lie, you rascal,' and struck me in the face. On receiving the blow, I returned it with such force as made my opponent reel backwards from me. Finding myself at liberty, I seized the opportunity and took to my heels, thinking my life was only to be saved by flight.

" I had not ran far before I was met by the police, who patrolled the streets at night ; who, presenting their swords to my breast, commanded me to stop, while my pursuers were close at my heels, ready to cut me down with their sabres. These two gallant officers represented me to the police as a robber ; and the guardians of the night were in the act of dragging me to the Guard-house, but in doing so, they pulled open my pelisse and saw the richly embroidered dress in which I had been acting. I had my two watches in my pocket, and my diamond rings on my fingers. On perceiving these, one of the policemen said to the other, ' This cannot be a thief.' I informed them that I was a singer belonging to the Court, and requested them to conduct me to my lodgings, where they would find that I was telling the truth. I wished, from principles of delicacy, to compromise the affair, in which the reputation of an individual was concerned, but my heroic opponents (who still followed me) swore they would be the first to publish the whole transaction, and, though I had escaped them now, revenge they would have some other time, and that then I should bite the dust. I told them that, ' finding they were dead to all sense of honour, I should prevent all their attacks as assassins ; but I was perfectly ready, notwithstanding their cowardly conduct, to meet them as men.' Full of bluster and threats, they took their departure, and the police conducted me in safety to my apartments, for which I amply rewarded them.

" The first visit I had, on the following morning, was from my friend Dr. O'Rourke, who informed me that he was told of the whole transaction the night before at the Military Coffee-house, and that, before four and twenty hours elapsed, my life would atone for my conduct. The Doctor begged me, by all means, to wait upon my kind friend and patron, Marshal Lacy ; upon Prince Charles Liechtenstein, Governor of Vienna. Those exalted persons advised me, by all means, to lay the whole transaction before the Emperor ; and Prince Liechtenstein promised he would prepare His Majesty for the recital.

" As the Emperor was free of access to all, I sought an audience and was honoured with the following gracious reception : ' So, O'Kelly,' said His Majesty, 'I hear that a disagreeable circumstance befell you last night. Prince Liechtenstein has told me all about it. I do not wish to hear anything about the lady, keep that in your own breast, and upon that point you have acted as a man of honour. I only want to know from yourself how the quarrel began with my officers.'

"I related the whole of the circumstances as they occurred, except one. The Emperor assured me that I should have full satisfaction, and gave directions for the two heroes to be sent for. They were brought before him, and he inquired of them how they had dared to violate the laws. The Count said that I was the aggressor, by standing in the way of his pretensions to a lady for whom he had conceived an affection, which, but for such interference, would in all probability be returned.

"The Emperor, to the best of my recollection, made the following remarks verbatim : 'So, sir, because you love a lady, to whom you are indifferent, you think you are justified in behaving ill to those on whom she chooses to bestow her attentions. My laws, sir, are not to be sacrificed to your malice, nor is the honour of my army to be sullied by any man who chooses to act in a manner unworthy of his rank. The duty of my officers is not only to keep peace themselves, but to preserve it inviolate against the attempts of others. What you both have done will justly stigmatise you in the eyes of the whole army. On my highway you attacked this young man, whose life you had meanly sought, at a moment when he was unarmed, and with odds which baffled his making resistance.'

"They attempted to justify their conduct, by observing that they should degrade their birth and rank in society by suffering themselves to be imposed on by a player, whom they considered so much beneath them. The Emperor said, 'The player whom you affect to despise is a man of honour ; but, as for you, you have acted like assassins, and, from this moment, I consider you unworthy to continue in my service ; I shall therefore give orders for removing you from the army.' The next day they were publicly degraded.

"I had the pleasure to hear from all quarters that the Emperor's decision was hailed as an act of justice ; and the first night I afterwards appeared on the stage I was received with repeated plaudits, which implied, I flattered myself, that the audience generally approved of my conduct.

"Four days before my departure for England, a little contretemps had nearly broken up our travelling arrangements. We were supping at the Ridotto Rooms, and my poor friend, Stephen Storace, who was proverbially a sober man, and who had a strong head for everything but drinking, had swallowed potent libations of sparkling champagne, which rendered him rather confused. He went into the ball-room, and saw his sister dancing with an officer in uniform, booted and spurred. In twirling round while waltzing, his spurs got entangled in Storace's dress, and both she and the officer came to the ground, to the great amusement of the bystanders. Stephen, thinking his sister had been intentionally insulted, commenced personal hostilities against the officer. A great bustle ensued, which was ended by half a dozen policemen seizing Storace and dragging him to the Guard-house, to which several English gentlemen followed him. The officer of the guard was very good-natured, and allowed us to send for some eatables and champagne; we remained with him all night, and a jovial night we had.[1] In the morning we departed, but Storace was obliged to tarry in durance vile till further orders. He was not, however, the least discomfited. He thought of the Italian proverb, as he told me:

Non anderà sempre così; come diceva
Il piccolo cane, quando menava
Il rosto alla fine la carne sarà cuerta.

"I was determined to make a bold push to get him released in the evening. I placed myself in the corridor through which the Emperor passed, after his dinner, to his study. He saw me, and said, 'Why, O'Kelly, I thought you were off for England?' 'I can't go, Sire,' was my answer. 'My friend, who was to travel with me, was last night put into prison.' I then told His Majesty who it was, and how it happened. He laughed at the tipsy composer's wanting to fight, and said, 'I am very sorry for

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[1] Lord Barnard also supped with him, for he notes in his Diary on February 21st, 1787: "J'ai soupé chez Storace en Prison." And the next day: "J'ai soupé chez La Storace, et Monsieur Storace a sorti de Prison."

Storace, for he is a man of great talent ; but I regret to observe that some of your English gentry who travel appear much altered from what they used to be. Formerly, they travelled after they had quitted college. It appears to me that now they travel before they go to it.' His Majesty then left me, saying, '*Bon voyage*, O'Kelly, I shall give directions that Storace may be set at liberty.'

" The next morning he was liberated. I waited upon my kind patron, Sir Robert Keith, Marshals Lacy and Laudon, and all those friends who had honoured me with their hospitality and protection. I went to take leave of the immortal Mozart and his charming wife and family. He gave me a letter to his father, Leopold Mozart, who was at the Court of Salzburg. I could hardly tear myself away from him, and, at parting, we both shed tears. Indeed, the memory of the many happy days which I passed at Vienna will never be effaced from my mind.

" In the last week of February, 1787, I quitted it with a heart full of grief and gratitude. Storace, her mother, her brother, Attwood, and myself, not forgetting Signora Storace's lap-dog, filled the travelling carriage, and, with four horses, we started for England Ho ! "

It was appropriate enough that Kelly and the Storaces should return to England together, for the success of all three had been like a fairy-tale since that day they first met so unceremoniously on the quay of Leghorn scarcely seven years before. Then, they were still almost children and on the threshold of their careers : now, all were famous and successful beyond their wildest aspirations of nonage ; and, as yet, the dream and the golden glory had not faded in possession, though for Stephen Storace the shadows of early death were already gathering unseen.

Chapter IV

France: Marie Antoinette to Napoleon. London: Mrs. Crouch

The returning travellers made their first halt at Salzburg, where Kelly had a letter to deliver from Mozart to his father, Leopold Mozart, who was sub-director of music in the chapel of the Prince-Archbishop of Salzburg; and in this city his famous son had been born in 1756. The older Mozart was assisted in the chapel by Michael Haydn, who by some critics was thought to surpass his celebrated brother in the composition of church music. The party was warmly welcomed by Leopold Mozart, who acted as guide to the sights of the city, then at the acme of its splendour, for at that date the Archbishop was still a reigning Prince, and preserved a state of great ostentation. His privileges were almost unbounded, his cathedral superb, and his Palace of Mirabell, and another in the Winter Square, of the greatest magnificence.[1] His income was said to be half a million; he had two hundred horses; twenty thousand oranges were gathered annually from the trees in his orangery. The Prince-Archbishop was of a roving eye for the other sex, and, hearing of Signora Storace's arrival in his dominions, he invited her and her party to a concert at his palace. "The Archbishop was a very fine-looking man, particularly gallant and attentive to the ladies, of whom there was a splendid show; it was conceived that he was very partial to the English and English manners. The music was chiefly instrumental, admirably performed; the band numerous and excellent." In the cathedral, Kelly observed a curious custom of the prosperous inhabitants of Salzburg, who selected the site of their future graves, and hung over them portraits of the still-living but eventual occupants—an artistic way of pegging out a necrological claim.

From Salzburg the Storaces and Kelly proceeded by vile roads, but through lovely country, to Munich, where they remained several days, and inspected the magnificent palace of the Elector of Bavaria. Here was abundance of paintings, statues, and all manner of works of art; and here Kelly gives another glimpse of the prodigal splendour of the ruling princes in the eighteenth century: "The chamber of the Elector, we were told, cost above one hundred thousand pounds; it contained a profusion of velvets, gold-tissue, and old-fashioned carved work; the bed was immense, groaning with splendour; the great staircase is of marble and gold; from the garden of the palace we were shown a secret passage, leading to the churches and convents of the town."

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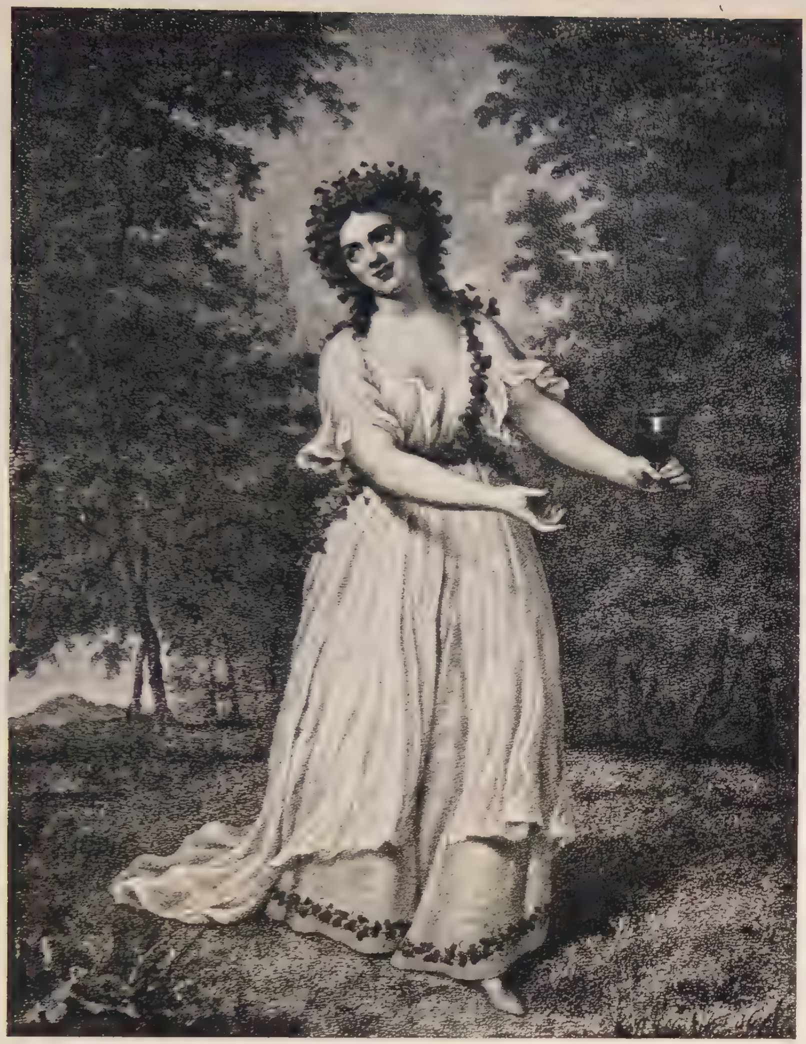
[1] The power of the Prince-Archbishops ceased in 1802, when it was secularised. The original Palace of Mirabell, with many other buildings, was destroyed in the disastrous fire of 1818.

Kelly saw the old painted houses of the broad streets, and in one of the avenues of the Niemptenburg Palace he and Attwood, the future organist of St. Paul's Cathedral, ran a race, for they were then light as "a feathered mercury." The Elector, hearing of the presence of the distinguished English musicians, invited them to perform at a grand concert, at which he, the Electress, and all the Court attended in state. Among the other performers were Dussek and the famous violinist, Frantzl. The visitors also went to see Raff, the finest tenor of his day, who, although past seventy, sang to them Bach's "Non so donde viene," which had been his greatest success.

At their inn at Munich the party found Lord Barnard, who had posted from Vienna. He invited them to dine with him, and to continue their journey together, one of them taking a seat in his carriage "turn and turn about." One may conclude that it was Nancy Storace's "turn" more often than the others.

The entries in his diary now become discreet. La Storace is no longer mentioned by name; only the word "*nous*" is written —"Nous avons voyagé toute la Journée et toute la nuit"; and on March 2nd, "Nous sommes parti de Munich à huit heure; nous sommes arrivé à Augsburg à dix heure ou nous sommes couché." His *avant-courier* was taken ill and had to remain at Munich, so it was arranged that each of the four men in turn should ride on in advance on a post-horse to the next posting-inn and secure horses, so escaping a delay on the road. So to Augsburg, remarkable for wig-makers, water-works, and dancing ladies, "who are by no means scrupulous on the point of exhibiting their legs," and balls every Sunday evening, "where were some very prettily dressed servant



ANNA STORACE

From a print in the British Museum

girls labouring assiduously at the dance, accompanied by a dulcimer, a violin, pipe, and tabor." After leaving Ulm, Lord Barnard, Nancy Storace, and her mother proceeded alone to Strasburg, while the other three men—Stephen Storace, Kelly, and Attwood—obligingly made a detour to Stuttgart, in order to look up a friend of Attwood's who was conveniently located there. On their way they had an adventure such as might well have been depicted by Mrs. Radcliffe in *The Romance of the Forest*, or by her later disciple, Walter Scott—though at this date Mrs. Radcliffe was but twenty-three and not as yet an author, while Scott was a child of eight. The eighteenth century was still the land of romance, and a journey for benighted travellers an experience of mystery and possible terrors. Thus it was after leaving Ulm for Stuttgart :

" In the execution of the design, we lost our way in the Black Forest : we were driven by a lad, the deputy-assistant ostler at the inn where we had changed horses, all the regular post-boys being unluckily out of the way ; the poor fellow was unacquainted with the road, the night was dark, and, considering the place we were in (famous for banditti), our situation was not the most enviable in the world. We wandered on, we knew not where, for some hours ; at last we saw a distant light ; we dismounted, and walked across the forest towards it, the carriage slowly following ; at length we got to a gate, at which we knocked ; a man within asked us what we wanted at that time of night. I was the spokesman, and, in bad German, said ' We were English travellers, who had lost our way, and were benighted in the Forest '—The young man immediately opened the gate and invited us in, and told us he was sure his mother would make us welcome.

" We were ushered into a large parlour, where was seated, in an arm-chair, an elderly lady, with eight of her grandchildren, placed round a supper-table ; she gave us a most hospitable reception, told us we had strayed widely from the right road, made us sit down and partake of her supper, which consisted of some cold roasted veal, chickens, salad, and an excellent omelet, and gave us some of the finest old hock I ever tasted. She said she was very happy in administering to our comforts, for she had a high respect for the English. She was a very agreeable old lady, and her charming family very attentive. She insisted upon sitting up with us until day-break, as she could not accommodate us with beds, and told us, that her eldest son should accompany us to the next post town, on the road to Stuttgart. In the morning we took leave of her, and changed horses at the next stage."

At Stuttgart they saw the theatre, which was the plaything of another royal supporter of the arts and music, the Duke of Würtemberg, who had actually impoverished himself by his lavish expenditure on his theatrical productions, particularly the ballets, for here the celebrated Noverre had presented his *Armida* and *Jason and Medea* at enormous expense.

At Strasburg they rejoined Nancy Storace, her mother, and Lord Barnard. Pleyel, the composer, supped with them. And then on by Nancy to Paris, where they took up their quarters at "L'Hôtel de Danemark" in the Faubourg St. Germain, then the most fashionable part of the town, and the usual resort of the English. They saw all the sights, including the King and Queen (Marie Antoinette) dining in public at Versailles, apparently then adored by the populace; in a few years, Kelly was to witness a sad change of scene. At that time in Paris there existed a curious custom to which strangers had to submit. Their rooms were invaded by the fishwomen from the markets, who presented nosegays, nor would they depart until they had received both money and kisses from the victims. The beau-ish and perfumed Kelly notes "that these amatory advances were to me a horrid nuisance."

He went to all the theatres. At the Opera he heard Gluck's *Iphigenia* (in which he had himself performed at Vienna), with fine ballet effects by Vestris and Gardel; Sacchini's *Œdipe à Colon*, with the celebrated bass, Cheron; and *Phædra*, sung by Madame St. Huberty,[1] the unfortunate actress who, some years later, together with her husband, was murdered by their servant when in England. At the Comédie Française he saw Madame Contare, Molé, Dugazzon, and Fleury act; and at the

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[1] Lord Barnard writes on March 19th, 1787, "Nous sommes allé voir Madame St. Huberty en *Alceste*." On the 15th he had noted: "Nous sommes allé aux plusieurs Boutiques. Nous avons diné au Palais Royal, et nous sommes allé aux Italiens pour voir Lucette et Lucas, et Nina." St. Huberty and her husband were murdered at Barnes Terrace in 1812.

Théâtre Italien, in the Rue Favart, he was delighted by Sedaine's and Grétry's *Richard Cœur de Lion*, a popular light opera of the time, with Clairval, who originated the part of Blondel.

At length the party set out for Boulogne, and put up at Mrs. Knowles's hotel. Here, and also in the packet-boat to Dover, was Frederick Pilon, a native of Cork, author of *The Deaf Lover*, *He would be a Soldier*, *The Fair American*, *The Invasion* (produced at Covent Garden), and other plays. He was trained for a doctor, but took to the stage, and acted in Edinburgh until he came to London and found employment on *The Morning Post*. Pilon was a jovial, convivial, extravagant, hare-brained fellow and his recent sojourn in Boulogne, when Kelly met him, had been desirable as a refuge from his creditors. As the packet-boat neared Dover, and Shakspere's Cliff came in sight, Pilon criticised the poet's appreciation of the spot and its altitude, which he considered unworthy of any notice. At the York Hotel, Pilon discovered he had left his trunk behind him at Boulogne, and told his new friends that he must return to France in the packet-boat that was sailing that night. There was a stiff breeze blowing, and, as the Irishman was a bad sailor, they tried to dissuade him from going, and to send a message for his luggage to be forwarded. But in vain, for, after numerous potations of hot brandy and water, he confessed: "Gad, my friends, if I don't get my trunk at once, I shall be ruined. It will be opened, and in it will be found the bitterest satire I could write upon all the people with whom, and upon whom, I have been living during the whole of my stay at Boulogne; and if they should see it, or hear of it, I shall never be able to show my face amongst them again."

So at midnight the grateful dramatist sailed back to Boulogne to recover his lampoon and to save his reputation: but he really need not have troubled, for he died the following year, at Lambeth, at the age of thirty-eight. Before that, Kelly met Pilon once again in London. Kelly was seated on one of the benches in St. James's Park ("for it was then allowable to sit upon them") with Cobb, late secretary to the East India Company, and author of *The Humourist* and *The First Floor*, when they were joined by Pilon, who proceeded to borrow two guineas from Cobb, and then departed. About half an hour later they went to the Orange

Coffee-house, where they found Pilon, who asked leave to join them at their dinner and wine. At the close of the meal, Pilon went to the bar, and insisted on paying the whole of the bill with the money which, three hours before, he had borrowed from Cobb : but this, of course, the others would not allow. The story reminds one somewhat of that of John Forster and Harrison Ainsworth. Ainsworth had seen in a shop a fine set of engravings of the works of Hogarth, but, much as he desired to possess them, the price was more than he could afford to give. He happened to mention the matter to Forster, who was dining with him that day, and nothing would do but that Forster must go and see the prints at once. So Ainsworth took him to the shop, and Forster declared that he *must* have the engravings, but he had not got the money, so would Ainsworth lend him the amount? His friend pointed out the absurdity of the proposition—that he should lend money for the purchase of prints he greatly wanted to have, but could not afford to buy himself ; but in vain ; the autocratic Forster insisted, and poor Ainsworth lent the money. The anecdote is silent on the point of the loan being repaid.

After breakfasting in Canterbury and dining in Rochester, Michael Kelly arrived in London, on a day of March, 1787, for the first time in his life, at the age of twenty-four. He was in the curious position of a British subject familiar with most of the continent of Europe, and famous there as an opera singer, yet an entire stranger in England, and unknown to the British public save by repute. The latter point was soon amended. On the evening of his arrival, Kelly, with Stephen Storace, called upon Thomas Linley at his house in Norfolk Street, Strand, and thereupon agreed with him to appear for the remainder of the season at Drury Lane Theatre. Present with Linley were his two daughters, Mrs. Sheridan and Mrs. Tickell. Mrs. Sheridan, then thirty-three years of age and at the meridian of her youthful beauty, actively assisted her father and her husband, Richard Brinsley Sheridan, in the management of Drury Lane Theatre, the two men having bought, in 1776, the two-sevenths share in the theatre, formerly held by Garrick, for which they paid £20,000. The following year *The Rivals* and *The School for Scandal* were produced there, *The Critic* in 1779.

Thomas Linley (1725–95) was a native of Wells, but established himself at Bath, where he won renown as a music master and promoter of the concerts during the most famous period of that city's social history. His beautiful daughters, Elizabeth and Mary, born respectively in 1754 and 1756, were immortalised by the brush of Gainsborough. The elder married Sheridan in 1773, and Mary married Richard Tickell, pamphleteer and commissioner of stamps, in 1780. The elder Linley survived both these daughters and his accomplished son, Thomas Linley, a fine musician, who was drowned in a boating accident when staying with the Duke of Ancaster in Lincolnshire, at the age of twenty-two, a shock from which the father never entirely recovered. At Drury Lane Theatre the elder Linley was particularly concerned with the musical arrangements.

Mrs. Sheridan asked Kelly if he had seen *Richard Cœur de Lion* in Paris, and on his telling her that he had, only four evenings before, she requested him to go on that night to Drury Lane and see the English version which she had adapted from the translation by General John Burgoyne (1722–1792)—that versatile soldier who eloped with Lady Charlotte Stanley (daughter of the Earl of Derby), escaped to France to avoid his creditors, was M.P. for Midhurst and Preston ; who served in America and reached the supreme command in Canada, and capitulated at Saratoga in 1777 ; was Commander-in-Chief in Ireland, and managed the Impeachment of Warren Hastings in 1795 ; his whole career interlarded with the writing of plays, such as *The Heiress*.

So Kelly and Storace, " accompanied by a young gentleman," crossed the Strand and entered Drury Lane Theatre, which was then the second building on the site ; designed by Wren, it dated from 1674, and these were the same boards where Betterton, Mrs. Bracegirdle, Nance Oldfield, Quin, Macklin, Kitty Clive, Garrick, and many another, had strutted their brief yet immortal hour. As the young men stepped into their box, King Richard of the Lion Heart on the stage was singing the bravura air, " L'univers que j'ai perdu " (" Lost to the world, forgot, forlorn "), most loudly accompanied from behind his prison walls by two French horns. The effect was very different from that they had recently heard in Paris, nor did the English vocalist seem in any way equal to M. Philippe, the King Richard of the French company. Kelly observed to Storace, "If His Majesty is the first and best singer in your theatre, I shall not fear to appear as his competitor for public favour." Storace laughed, and informed him that the actor who was singing was the celebrated tragedian, John Philip Kemble, who, to oblige the proprietors of the theatre,[1] had undertaken the part of King Richard, as there was no other "singer" in the company capable of representing the melodious captive. Later, when Kelly was introduced to the great actor, Kemble was much amused to learn that he had been taken to represent the best operatic Orpheus that London could produce. When he was rehearsing the song just mentioned, the conductor of the band called out from the orchestra, "Mr. Kemble, my dear Mr. Kemble, you are murdering time." To which Kemble, taking a pinch of snuff, calmly and coolly replied, "My dear sir, it is better for me to murder time at once, than be continually beating him as you do."

John Philip Kemble (1757–1823) was at this date thirty years of age and in the prime of his powers and beauty, for he is acknowledged to have been the handsomest of all actors. His stately grace as Coriolanus and Cato still lives in the superb portraits by Lawrence, and of his dignity and distinction Pitt said, "There is the noblest actor I ever beheld." Less than two years the junior of his sister Sarah (Mrs. Siddons), John Kemble, like her, had appeared on the stage as a child, when required, in the plays produced by their parents, who were strolling Thespians. He received a better education than most of his class at that time, both at a Roman Catholic seminary at Sedgeley Park, in Staffordshire, and in the English College at Douay. After making his first appearance as an adult actor, when nineteen, at Wolverhampton, in the part of Theodosius, he had many hard experiences. He was laughed at by the quality of York, and in Gloucestershire, only about ten years before Kelly met him as a very famous man, he was often in want of food and the money to pay for a night's lodging. An actor named Watson, subsequently proprietor and manager of the theatre at Cheltenham, was his early companion in these straits, and Kelly relates of the two allies :

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[1] John Philip Kemble made his first appearance at Drury Lane Theatre as Hamlet on September 30th, 1783. He became manager in 1788.

"The eccentric Watson was a fellow of infinite jest and humour ; full of Thespian anecdotes, and perfectly master of the art of driving away loathed melancholy. Many a hearty laugh have I had with him ; he was an Irishman, and had, although I say it who should not say it, all the natural wit of his country about him. He was of a very respectable family (Quakers) in Clonmell. In John Kemble's younger days he was a near ally of his, and both belonged to a strolling company. They lived or rather, by Watson's account, *starved together* ; at one time, in Gloucestershire, they were left penniless ; and after continued vicissitudes, Watson assured me, such was their distress that at that time they were glad to get into a turnip-field, and make a meal of its produce uncooked ; and, he added, it was while regaling on the raw vegetable that they hit upon a scheme to recruit their finances, and a lucky turn-up it turned out. It was neither more nor less than that John Kemble should turn Methodist preacher, and Watson perform the part of clerk. Their scheme was organised, and Tewkesbury was their first scene of action ; they drew together, in a field, a numerous congregation, and Kemble preached with such piety, and so much effect, that, positively, a large collection rewarded his labours. This anecdote, Kemble himself told me, was perfectly true."[1]

Kelly also makes mention of Kemble's wonderful memory. When, in March, 1794, the new and third Drury Lane Theatre was reopened with *Macbeth*, there was a prologue, written by General Fitzpatrick, to be spoken by Kemble, and, while he was waiting dinner at Kelly's house for Sheridan, who was late as usual, he studied the fifty lines, and was perfect in every word of them before dinner was announced. Kelly often heard Kemble say that he was willing to bet that in four days he would repeat every line in a newspaper, advertisements and all, verbatim, in their regular order, without misplacing or missing a single word.

Michael Kelly chose for his début in London, at Drury Lane, on April 20th, 1787, *Lionel and Clarissa*, the same Bickerstaffe opera in which, exactly eight years before, he had won renown in Dublin as a boy in his teens, on the eve of sailing for Italy. For the London production, in addition to all the original music, he sang an Italian air by Sarti with English words written for him by Richard Tickell, Sheridan's brother-in-law, and a duet with words written by Dr. Lawrence, and the music by himself and Stephen Storace, who thus initiated his work for Drury Lane Theatre. Thomas King (1730–1805), the actor, who created the part of Sir Peter Teazle at the first production of *The School for Scandal* in 1777, and Thomas Linley coached him in the dialogue and diction, for, after so many impressionable years spent in Italy and Austria, Kelly was almost a foreigner in his way of speaking English. However, when the eventful night came, he was received with all possible kindness and indulgence, and he was successful beyond his warmest hopes. The vogue of Bickerstaffe was still immense. At the time Kelly appeared in *Lionel and Clarissa*[1] at Drury Lane, *Love in a Village* was revived at Covent Garden, with Jack Johnstone (1749–1828), the Irish tenor and comedian, as Young Meadows, singing in a " peculiarly fine falsetto voice. Mrs. Billington[2] was the Rosetta. I thought her an angel in beauty, and the St. Cecilia of song," Kelly notes. It was when playing these two parts of Young Meadows and Rosetta in a production of *Love in a Village* at Wolverhampton, in 1773, that William Siddons and Sarah Kemble fell in love in their private capacity also, and were married the same year, despite parental opposition. Following the run of *Lionel and Clarissa*, Kelly was seen as Young Meadows, and for this production of *Love in a Village* he introduced some music of Gluck's for which Mrs. Sheridan wrote the words, "Love, Thou Maddening Power." This was always encored, like the duet, "Each Joy in Thee Possessing." The latter proved to be singularly appropriate, for in his prima donna, who sang the rôles of Clarissa and Rosetta,

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[1] This episode was introduced by Miss Mulock in chapter V. of *John Halifax, Gentleman*, in the scene where John Halifax and Phineas Fletcher are on their way from Tewkesbury to Cheltenham. In the latter town they see Mrs. Siddons act Lady Macbeth—the most vivid part of the book.

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[1] The Jessamy of this production was James Dodd (1730–96), and Kelly says that, though the actor was approaching his sixtieth year, he never saw the part so excellently represented. All Dodd's fops were good, particularly Sparkish in *The Country Girl* and Lord Foppington. Charles Lamb praised his Sir Andrew Aguecheek—" Dodd was *it*, as it came out of nature's hands. It might be said to remain *in puris naturalibus*."

[2] Mrs. Billington (Elizabeth Weichsel) made her first appearance as Rosetta the previous year, on February 13th, 1786, at the age of eighteen, this being also the first time she sang in light opera.

Michael Kelly found the romance of his life in the person of the lovely Mrs. Crouch, then twenty-four years of age and a year his junior. At his very first sight of Mrs. Crouch he had written of her : "I was struck with admiration of her wonderful beauty. She seemed to me to aggregate in herself, like the Venus of Apelles, all that was exquisite and charming."

Anna Maria Crouch—"the beautiful, the syren songstress," as Tate Wilkinson styles her—was born on April 20th, 1763. Her father, Peregrine Phillips, a rather shiftless person who combined literary composition[1] with his work as a lawyer and later as an official in the Wine Office, claimed to be descended from a younger branch of the ancient Welsh family of Philipps, of Picton Castle, Co. Pembroke, Baronets. At any rate, he had a French mother in the person of a former Mademoiselle Cordé, who is said to have been a near cousin of Charlotte Corday. Peregrine Phillips married a Miss Gascoyne, daughter of a farmer in Worcestershire, but she died early, and their daughter Anna was brought up to a great extent by an aunt named Le Clerc in Prince's Street, Cavendish Square. The girl displaying much vocal gift, she was articled to Thomas Linley for the training of her voice, and she made such rapid progress that at the age of seventeen she appeared, for the first time on any stage, in the important rôle of Mandane, in Arne's opera of *Artaxerxes* at Drury Lane on November 11th, 1780. She is described then as " a timid and lovely trembler," and her voice as " sweet, rather than powerful; in singing it ravishes the ear with its delicacy and melting softness." She was thus admirably equipped to undertake the popular parts of Polly in *The Beggar's Opera* and Clarissa and Rosetta in Bickerstaffe's operas. But she also appeared in other rôles at Drury Lane, such as Louisa Dudley in *The West Indian*, and as Ophelia to the Hamlet of Kemble.

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[1] Peregrine Phillips was a friend of Dr. Johnson, which led him perhaps to edit an edition of the poetry of Richard Crashaw in 1785, to which he prefixed a short Memoir of the worthy Canon of Loretto, who died there in the year 1649. Nearly thirty years earlier, Phillips had written a satire entitled, *Covent Garden*, in the course of which he lamented the abundance of brothels which were there at that period ; when also The Shakspere's Head tavern was the resort of the abandoned :

> *Once famed for piety and grace,*
> *Where Holy Fathers told their beads,*
> *And Nuns confessed their evil deeds :*
> *But oh ! sad change, oh ! shame to tell*
> *How soon a prey to vice it fell ;*
> *How, since, its justest appellation*
> *Is*—GRAND SERAGLIO TO THE NATION.
> *Oh ! Shakespeare, with what pain I see*
> *The small regard that's paid to thee :*
> *High raised above a tavern door*
> *T' invite each drunken rake and whore.*

Neither *Covent Garden* (1756) nor his next little volume, *A Sentimental Diary kept in an Excursion to Littlehampton and Brighthelmstone*, 1778, are attributed to Peregrine Phillips in the Catalogue of the British Museum Library. He was also the author of *Six Letters to the Good People of England, and Several Other Pieces relative to the Dispute between Englishmen in Europe and in America*, "by An Old English Merchant, and a Friend to the King," which shows the influence of his early friend, Benjamin Franklin, whom he had known intimately when in America as a young man. Peregrine Phillips had a pleasant sense of humour, and could present his literary opinions with an amusing touch. How good is his vignette of Mrs. Radcliffe : "She comes wrapped in all the terrors of an Enchantress, waves over me her ebon wand, and conveys me to scenes of mid-night horrors ; and, like an old knight-errant, I am doomed to encounter, within the dreary recesses of some ruined castle, flights of ill-omened birds ; fierce banditti rushing by torch-light through the gloom to search for prey ; and, more appalling still, a host of spectre forms. I feel unnerved by fear—a pang rouses me, and I rejoice to find myself in my bed laid up by the gout, rather than in the scenes she presents to my imagination ; and well do my feelings confess the strength of her powers."

It was as Clarissa that Miss Phillips assumed her second part on the occasion of her benefit in April, 1781, which was attended by her patrons, the Lord Mayor of London and his wife, for, in the amusing words of Mrs. Crouch's memoirist, M. J. Young, " the amiable Lady Lewes, then the Lady Mayoress, had frequently honoured her young protégée with invitations to the Mansion House, and exerted her influence to fill the boxes. . . . In the stage-box, left of the pit, sat Sir Watkin Lewes, with his gold chain as Lord Mayor, the Lady Mayoress, and a large party. Most of the other boxes were *nobly*, and *all* were elegantly filled. Miss Phillips was received with the most encouraging plaudits. Her youth, beauty, and innate modesty were exactly suited to the character of Clarissa, and she gave it every charm of feminine delicacy." She was supported in the opera by a fine cast, including Mattocks, Charles Bannister, Aickin, Dodd, Parsons, Mrs. Hopkins, and Mrs. Wrighten, with the addition of King, Palmer, and Mrs. Brereton (later the wife of John Philip Kemble) for the after farce of *Who's the Dupe?* In this piece, Parsons, as Doiley, had a line with the words, " Lord Mayor of London." The actor seized his opportunity : " Parsons raised himself on his toes, seemed swelling himself into a portly man, and then fixed his eyes on Sir Watkin Lewes, and with a look, which cannot be expressed, but well conceived by all who remember him, repeated his 'Lord Mayor of London.' The eyes of Parsons directed those of the whole house; a general peal of applause was given to the actor, and then continued in honour of his Lordship so pointedly, that he was obliged to stand up and bow his thanks for the unexpected and tumultuous salute." After this tribute, the Lord Mayor seems to have assumed the demeanour of royalty: "The Lord Mayor, when the opera was ended, sent for Mr. Phillips into his box, and both his Lordship and Lady Mayoress kindly congratulated him on the merit and success of his daughter, and kept him in conversation for a considerable time. This public mark of attention and favour to Mr. Phillips reflected a brighter lustre over Sir Watkin and Lady Lewes, in the opinion of many observers, than annual or even hereditary titles can bestow, if the possessors of those titles want sense to discover abilities, or hearts to encourage them."[1]

When Miss Phillips went to Ireland to appear on the stage there, her father was armed with a letter from his old friend, Dr. Johnson, recommending them to the patronage of William Windham, Chief Secretary to the Earl of Northington, the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland:

> "SIR,
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> "The bringer of this letter is the father of Miss Phillips, a singer, who comes to try her voice on the stage of Dublin.
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> "Mr. Phillips is one of my old friends; and as I am of opinion that neither he nor his daughter will do anything

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[1] Despite this reservation as to the undiluted blessings of titles, Mr. Young was a sincere admirer of the aristocracy, and anyone claiming relation to such had his or her pretension noted. Thus, in speaking of a popular singer at the Smock Alley Theatre in Dublin, "Mr. Wilder's second wife was a lady of genteel fortune, and nearly related to nobility." There are many gems of unconscious humour in the pages of Mrs. Crouch's biographer which deserve to be rescued from oblivion, such as his observations on his subject's delight in alms-houses: "Through her interest has many a poor family been relieved, many children placed in schools and boys in the Marine Society, who else might have been vagabonds and pickpockets, and in doing this she was a friend to her country, as well as to the poor. Many who have come to her, bending beneath the double weight of old age and poverty, have, through her means, enjoyed for the remainder of their days retirement and tranquillity in those peaceful abodes with which benevolence has adorned our metropolis. She used to say, that alms-houses environed London like a circle of glory, and that she could never look at those neat asylums for reduced gentility without shedding tears of pleasure. Nature had given her a feeling heart, a tear for pity."

that can disgrace their benefactors, I take the liberty of entreating you to countenance and protect them so far as may be suitable to your station and character; and shall consider myself as obliged by any favourable notice which they shall have the honour of receiving from you.

"I am, Sir, Your most humble servant,

"SAM. JOHNSON.

"London, *May* 31*st*, 1783."

In quoting this letter from Boswell in her *Dramatic Biography*, the acidulated Mrs. Oxberry, who had no admiration for the Great Lexicographer, observes if such an introduction had been supplied to her, she would have flung it back in the learned Doctor's face. It must be admitted that Johnson's use of the word "disgrace" was not very happy. Perhaps Peregrine Phillips did not like it, for in his edition of the poetry of Richard Crashaw, 1785, he alludes to his friend in a somewhat similarly polite but contemptuous way—"the most *respectable* of men and writers, Doctor Johnson." Johnson had died the previous year—1784.

In 1783, Miss Phillips was singing in Dublin, and again in the following year, when she met a youth, the son and heir of an important Irish peer, whose name has never been divulged in the accounts of this matter. The two young people fell in love, and, both being under age and their respective fathers each refusing consent, they decided to elope. They went to a priest, who commenced the marriage office, but, when he asked and heard the name of the intended bridegroom, he refused to go further with the ceremony in view of his high birth, his youth, and the absence of his relatives. The baffled lovers then fled to the coast, intending to embark for Scotland, Miss Phillips being also accompanied by her young brother and her maid, so all was in order as concerned the "virtue" of the adventure. But Fate was against them; contrary winds prevented the vessel from sailing, and the two fathers, the peer and Mr. Phillips, arrived in hot pursuit together. The unhappy lovers were torn asunder and separated for ever. It was probably this affair which caused the pensive sadness that characterised the fair singer in the future. When Miss Phillips returned to London, she found the town talking of her adventure, and she suffered great annoyance on her appearance at Drury Lane as Emily in *The Double Disguise*, when Mrs. Wrighten, in the character of an Irish chambermaid, addressed to her with marked archness and point a song that, unhappily, rather aptly applied to recent events:

Each pretty young miss, with a long heavy purse,
Is courted and flattered, and easily had:
She longs to be taken for better or worse,
And quickly elopes *with an* Irish lad—
To be sure—she don't like a brisk Irish lad.

The audience immediately perceived and applauded the joke, while "poor Miss Phillips with difficulty supported herself on the stage while Mrs. Wrighten sung the song twice, for it was universally encored. Those who knew the susceptibility of a wounded heart, will not wonder that Miss Phillips should feel this trifle."

In the following year she was persuaded to marry a good-looking midshipman in the Royal Navy, Rollings Edward Crouch, who had been an admirer of her at the theatre, where he constantly attended on the nights she appeared. The marriage took place on January 9th, 1785, at the parish church of Twickenham, and proved to be a very unhappy one, for Crouch was an unfaithful husband. Six years later a child was born, who, however, only survived for two days. Her Memoirs give the following account, and is evidence of her unlucky proneness to curious accidents: "One morning when Mrs. Crouch had attended a rehearsal, in turning round hastily on the top of some steps at the theatre, to speak to a person belonging to it, she fell down, and hurt herself very seriously in the fall. She suffered greatly all the day, but was resolved, if possible, to play at night, as she was sensible how much it would distress the person, whose benefit it was, if she were to decline the character; therefore, but not without great difficulty, she supported herself through the character, and sung all the songs incident to it, and got home to her lodgings pleased, even in pain, with the thought of not being the cause of a great disappointment. At an early hour the next morning, when but eight months advanced in her pregnancy, she was delivered of a girl, who existed only two days. The life of Mrs. Crouch was in some danger for some time and she recovered very slowly." From this date Mr. and Mrs. Crouch ceased to live together, for reasons that will be obvious presently.

After Mrs. Crouch was dead, the scandalous memoirists of the time did not hesitate to make serious allegations against her, namely, that at the date—1791—Mrs. Crouch separated from her husband she became the mistress of the Prince of Wales (George IV), and, further, that she drank to excess. Robert Huish, in his *Memoirs of George the Fourth*, thus baldly expresses the story :

" We shall briefly state another amour which followed that of Mrs. Billington, and that was with Mrs. Crouch, also an actress, who was then in the zenith of her beauty. On this lady the Prince expended considerable sums, in one instance to the amount of £10,000, independently of a profusion of jewels and trinkets, which were purchased at Gray's, to the amount of £5,000, and which, when, in a short time afterwards, a schedule of His Royal Highness's debts was laid before his Royal Parent, excited so strongly his disapprobation and resentment that the King refused to interfere in the liquidation of his debts. . . . It is melancholy to relate that after having squandered immense sums of money, and exposed himself to the ridicule of his associates, the Prince found that he had selected an individual who, although her person and form were beauteous, was so addicted to intoxication that her breath became disgustingly tainted, which gave rise to the well-known simile of George Hanger, comparing her throat to a smoky chimney—foul and stinking."

The Honourable Grantley Berkeley, in his *Life and Recollections*, elaborated this story with many errors and the suggestion that it was Michael Kelly who acted as procurer, and handed over the woman he so intensely admired and respected to the lascivious Prince :

" Michael Kelly was extremely attentive to His Royal Highness, and His Royal Highness, who liked to be amused, was always affable and condescending to him. He did more than this in the way of musical patronage. Michael Kelly had a pupil, a very clever pupil, a very pretty pupil. His Royal Highness condescended to be present at a strictly private exhibition of her talents, in a quiet apartment a little removed from the convenient music-shop,[1] and was enraptured in the most dilettante fashion. His Royal Highness came again and again to the quiet apartment, always more and more enjoying the private performance. The accommodating wine and music merchant, who had hitherto invariably thrown himself in the way of His Royal Highness when the latter honoured the premises with his presence, now as accommodatingly kept out of his way. What could His Royal Highness do but take Michael Kelly's music? He did more—he took Michael Kelly's pupil. Mrs. Crouch was young and beautiful, a charming actress, an accomplished musician. Enjoying such extraordinary patronage, there is nothing singular in her possessing a taste for extravagance that was not easily satisfied. I shall here merely confine myself to recording the melancholy fact that the liberal patronage His Royal Highness conferred upon the drama caused him eventually so much embarrassment that an attempt had to be made to ascertain his debts towards striving to effect an arrangement with his creditors.

"A group of commissioners, or trustees, or other official fogies, were established as a Committee of Inquiry, and they summoned before them all claimants. These worthies were not patrons of the drama, not men of fashion sensible of the weaknesses of their nature, but white-headed, bald-headed, pig-headed, and pig-tailed men of business. Among others who appeared in person to substantiate their claims on His Royal Highness was Michael Kelly's pupil. The Court looked at her over their spectacles, under their spectacles, and through their spectacles, even their hitherto pendent tails peeped at her over their pates as soon as the beautiful creature presented herself before them. The most pig-headed and pig-tailed of the group held in his fat hand a slip of paper signed by His Royal Highness, a promise to pay several thousand pounds sterling to Mrs. Crouch. His Royal Highness appeared to have been as fond of writing his own name, as of forgetting the purpose for which it had been written. His autograph had evidently been in great request, but had generally been appended to slips of caligraphy that gave it a value it would not otherwise have possessed. It was so in this instance. ‘ Madam ! ’ cried the premier official, glaring at the fair creditor with a solemn gravity worthy of a Commissioner of Bankruptcy about to examine a fraudulent trader, ‘ have the goodness to state what consideration you gave His Royal Highness for the sum named in this document.’ The charming creature, whose face had come like sunshine into the gloomy chamber, became suddenly flushed. She asked to see the paper. It was handed to her, the Committee of Inquiry severally staring at her in a singularly rude and disagreeable manner. To the utter confusion and intense bewilderment of all the white-heads, the bald-heads, and the pig-heads, the fair creditor tore it into small fragments and scattered them in their fat faces, stamping her pretty foot on the royal autograph as it fell to the floor. ‘ As His Royal Highness,’ she said calmly, ‘ does not appear to know how to appreciate his own obligations, I am forced to show him the value I set upon them.’ With a flash of scorn that passed over all the group, Mrs. Crouch swept out of the room, unquestionably as virtuously indignant as—she ought to have been.”

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[1] Grantley Berkeley is writing of events that are alleged to have occurred in the year 1791; Michael Kelly did not open his music shop until 1802 (see later, pp. 331–3.).

Such is Berkeley’s story, which seems strangely at variance with Mrs. Crouch’s admittedly shy and nervous nature, and one without other corroboration. It is probably true that Mrs. Crouch was, for a brief period, the mistress of the Prince of Wales, and that the charge of excessive indulgence in alcohol also had some foundation in sad verity. Yet Kelly, in his chivalrous devotion to her, never gives the slightest hint that there was any trouble of the latter kind. And he certainly was not in a position to hand over Mrs. Crouch to the Prince of Wales in 1791, as it was only in that year that he commenced to live alone with her after the separation from her husband. But the allegations must be accepted as true in the main facts, as they were repeated by responsible authorities. The obituary notice of Mrs. Crouch in *The Gentleman’s Magazine*, October, 1805, after alluding to her beauty and talents—“ a subject of admiration to every poet and critick ”—goes on to say : “ She made a sort of epoch in the theatre, and was pursued and idolized by the town. In an evil hour she gave her hand to Mr. Crouch, a midshipman, whose showy person and address won her affections. . . . In that union she found nothing but misery. With the secret load upon her heart of ill-usage at home, she sought for happiness with the most dazzling and illustrious of lovers. She separated from her husband on the occasion, but made him a provision to which he was not entitled by his conduct."

And concerning the other charge of excessive alcohol, Mrs. Oxberry, in her *Dramatic Biography*, after alluding to the accidents Mrs. Crouch had experienced, says these mishaps had "visibly affected her health; she was afflicted with violent spasms in her stomach, and knowing through the medium of the old song that

Grog cures the cough,
The asthma and the phthisic,
And is to all the ladies
The very best of physic,

she tried it. . . . She actually drank to excess, which ultimately deprived her of her reason. Her insanity was not, however, continual, and appeared to be more the result of excitement than any predisposition to lunacy. A few days before her death she was restored to the perfect possession of her faculties. . . ."[1]

The devoted private friendship between Kelly and Mrs. Crouch commenced at the time of their first professional work together, in 1787, when almost immediately he went to live with Crouch (who had retired from the Navy) and his wife in Titchfield Street, and later in Brydges Street.[2] They next moved to Pall Mall, where Mrs. Crouch commenced her famous parties, which were attended by the Prince of Wales and all the most distinguished men about town. Then, when husband and wife separated by mutual consent in 1791—"Mr. Crouch never appreciating the gem which he possessed," as Kelly puts it—Mrs. Crouch had her episode of concubinage with the Prince of Wales, and then returned to Kelly in their new house in Suffolk Street, Pall Mall, and remained with him for the rest of her life. The world regarded their relationship as a sexual one, and it may have been so ; on another supposition, it may have been a case of sincere affection and artistic sympathy which led them to join their lives ; they were possibly (even unconsciously it may be) two sexually inverted persons who found in each other a sympathetic friend, with the additional bond of musical gifts which were intensified and perfected by their association together in performance. There is no evidence of illicit amatory adventure elsewhere in either of their lives apart from Mrs. Crouch's affair with the Prince of Wales, which was an "honour" in those days of the Stage she could scarcely have refused if she sought for professional fame and advancement. As for Michael Kelly, he had "effeminate features,"[1] and he relates no amorous adventures in his Memoirs, for in the two stories, already given, which might partially be placed in this category, he is careful to point out that these particular experiences at Brescia[2] and Vienna[3] arose from groundless jealousy on the part of active lovers of the ladies in question. It may be concluded, therefore, that amativeness was not strongly developed in him ; bearing in mind the lax moral state of the theatre in England during his period, there was never the slightest hint of rumour that he had any sexual relationship with the other actresses and singers with whom he played, though some of them, such as Mrs. Billington and Madame Banti, were promiscuously immoral women.

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[1] This account is a curious example of the freedom of public comment upon a recently deceased person permitted at that time, for it must be remembered that Kelly and Mrs. Crouch's sister were still living, and, so, wounded by these crude remarks.

[2] In Brydges Street were situated the main frontage and entrance of Drury Lane Theatre; later it was included in Catherine Street, of which it formed the northern portion.

Farington notes in his Diary, January 3rd, 1800 : "Mrs. Crouch has lived in the same House with Kelly the Singer many years under suspicious circumstances, though they do not regularly cohabit. Heath told me Mrs. Crouch was a Miss Phillips, daughter of an attorney, a man in a low way in that profession. Heath has known her for many years. She was young, beautiful, and chaste, when she married a Lieutenant in the Navy, who after a time quitted Her. In the West of England he married a young Lady of considerable expectations. His first marriage

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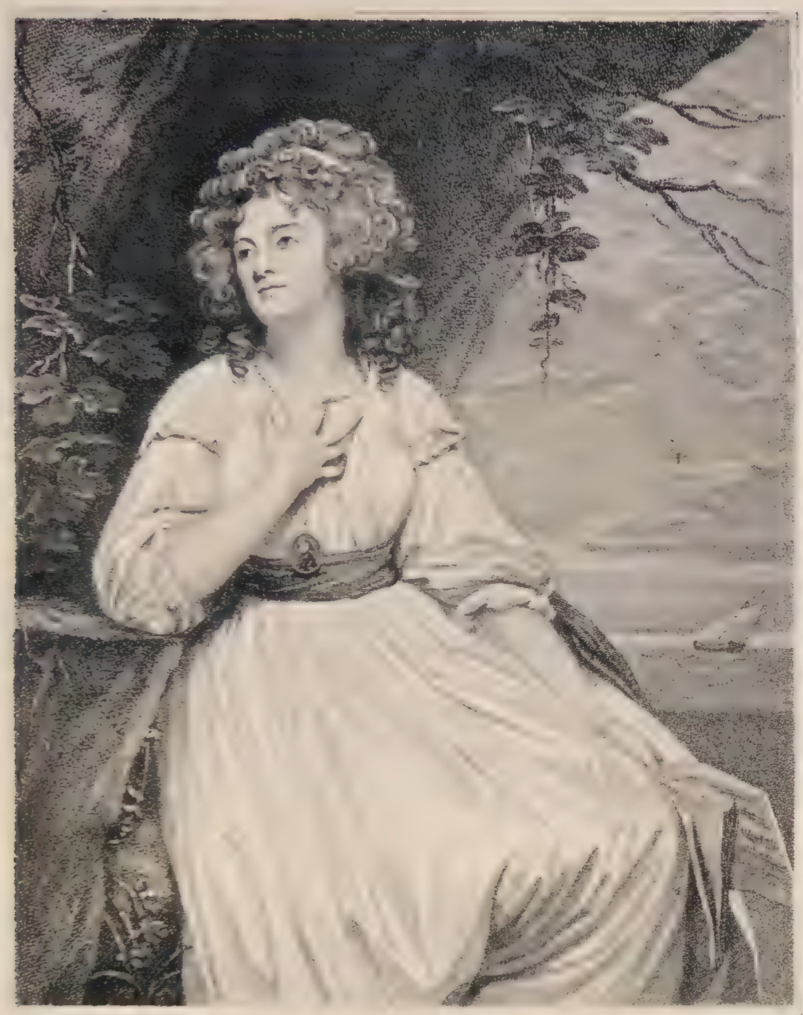
[1] Pohl's *Mozart in London*.

[2] See *ante*, p. 77-9.

[3] See *ante*, p. 122-4.



MRS. CROUCH

(Miss Anna Maria Phillips

From the portrait by Romney, engraved by Bartolozzi

The miniature is presumably of Michael Kelly

being divulged, Her relations sought for evidence to convict him, in order to separate him from his second wife. Heath was applied to, as was Mrs. Crouch, who privately informed her Husband of the enquiry, on which he quitted England."

[Farington's editor, Mr. Greig, adds in a footnote that John Taylor, editor of *The Morning Post*, mentioned spending an evening with Mrs. Crouch at her father's house in Gray's Inn Lane (now Road), and that her beauty so impressed him that he "payed particular attention to her; but her father kept a rigid eye upon her, and looked displeased when anything was addressed to her in the way of compliment."]

It transpires from the Memoirs of William Hickey that it was a Miss Rider with whom Crouch had formed a connection. He relates in 1796:

"Mr. John Rider . . . having received the unwelcome information that his favourite and only child (a daughter) of nineteen years of age had unhappily attached herself to Mr. Crouch, the husband of the famous singer, and had actually gone to reside with him, all her mother's endeavours to get her from him proving ineffectual, he resolved to go himself to England for the express purpose of rescuing his girl from so disgraceful a connection. . . .

"1798. The poor distressed father pursued her for several weeks from place to place, through a great part of France and Flanders, without ever being able to obtain an interview. He then addressed a very pathetic letter to her . . . earnestly soliciting her to return to virtue and her parental roof, and promising that she should be received without upbraidings. . . . This letter she immediately answered, pleading guilty to the heavy charges it contained, readily admitting the impropriety, the immorality of the step she had taken, but pleaded love, unconquerable love! amounting almost to phrenzy, nor should she be able, while a single breath animated her heart, ever to abandon or forsake the man she adored, for whom she had sacrificed, and must continue to sacrifice, fame, character, and fortune . . . The unfortunate parent was therefore compelled to leave her to her fate. He returned to England forthwith, and by the first ship that sailed for India, embarked on her to resume his duties in the Company's service."

In 1805, shortly before her death, Mrs. Crouch spoke of Miss Rider thus: "I sincerely forgive the whole conduct of Mr. Crouch to myself; he is older now, and I hope is sufficiently sensible of his errors to abjure them, and render the present object of his choice, who I hear is a deserving woman, far happier than he did me, and they may rest assured that I will never take the least step to interrupt their felicity."

In her earlier life, of course, Mrs. Crouch had numerous admirers. John Philip Kemble is said to have been deeply in love with her; reports of their approaching marriage appeared in the news-sheets; but Miss Phillips could only feel for him as a very valued friend. Some four years before the date this narrative has now arrived at—that is to say, in 1783—he had opportunity of showing his chivalrous devotion. Kemble and his sister, Mrs. Siddons, were playing at Limerick, and Mrs. Crouch was also there, singing in opera on alternate nights to the appearance of the tragedians. She was extremely popular and the theme of admiration, particularly of the hot-blooded and wild-headed young officers of an Irish militia regiment quartered in Limerick. One evening after Mrs. Crouch (then Miss Phillips) had performed Rosetta in *Love in a Village*, these officers, being very much intoxicated, swore they would escort her back to her lodgings, and for this purpose forced their way to the entrance of Miss Phillips's dressing-room. She was terrified, and locked the door, which the gallant heroes, with many martial oaths, declared they would break open. It so happened that the actress's father, Peregrine Phillips, was laid up with the gout, and had requested John Kemble to escort his daughter home after the conclusion of the play. The moment Kemble heard of the military disturbance, he proceeded to the scene of action, and politely asked the invading force to retire: but they truculently refused to move without Miss Phillips. Kemble, who had his sword with him, then requested Miss Phillips to open the door and come out, which she did, and was leaving the theatre with her friend when one of the officers, named Yelverton, came behind Kemble, and made a cut at his head with his sabre. A woman—one of the stage-dressers, named Judy Cameron—observed the action just in time, seized the man's arm, and deflected the blow, and then wrested the sword from his hand, thereby probably saving Kemble's life. Kemble perceived the whole incident, and remained as cold and dignified as ever. Without the slightest trace of emotion, he merely turned to his preserver, Judy Cameron, and said in stately tones, "Well done, Euphrasia."[1] He then drew his sword, the cowed heroes fell back, and Miss Phillips reached her sedan-chair and her lodgings without further trouble. The next morning, Lord Muskerry, the Colonel of the regiment, called upon Kemble and offered every apology.

Four days after Kelly made his début in London, he witnessed that of his friend, Nancy Storace, she achieving an enthusiastic success at the Opera House in Paisiello's *Schiavi per Amore*, on April 24th, 1787, when the Prince of Wales and his uncle, the Duke of Cumberland, and the Duchess of Cumberland (who had been Mrs. Horton and one of the causes of the Royal Marriage Act) were present. But as her operatic triumphs waxed, La Storace's *affaire* with Lord Barnard waned. He was in London, and caught up in the whirlwind of the sophisticated society that thronged around the Prince of Wales. Thus on May 9th: "J'ai déjeuner chez le Prince de Galles. J'ai diné chez Monsieur Davenport. Je suis allé à Ranelagh ; et j'ai soupé avec le Prince chez Miladie Haggerston"—who was the sister of Mrs. Fitzherbert —"chez Lady Galloway, et puis au Bal du Prince à Almack's." He attended the benefit of La Storace on the 24th, but instead of supping with her after the performance, as he would have done in Vienna, he goes on to Cumberland House. He dined with La Storace on June 6th, and that seems to have been the end. Lord Barnard came of age the following month ; he had made his Grand Tour and sown his juvenile oats. He was expected to marry in his own class, and so, as poor Anna Storace vanishes from his journal, the name of a Duke's daughter occurs daily—that of Lady Katherine Powlett, daughter of the Duke of Bolton. Thus, "J'ai montré à cheval avec Miladie Katherine." "J'ai diné à Bolton House." "J'ai montré à cheval avec ma chère Miladie." And then, on the very day that sees the end of La Storace—June 6th, 1787—"J'étois à Bolton House toute la

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[1] Euphrasia (Mrs. Siddons's favourite part), in *The Grecian Daughter*, by Arthur Murphy, intercepted the blow of the assassin Dionysius when he attempted to stab her father, Evander : "My child, my daughter, saved again by thee."

Matinée. J'ai diné chez Mademoiselle Storace. Je suis allé à Bolton House." One can conjecture what passed that day at Bolton House before and after the visit to the apartment of the opera diva. Lord Barnard and Lady Katherine were married three months later. But he preserved his souvenirs of Vienna, for he became the President of the London Vienna Club, which he and his friends founded in memory of their stay in that capital, with its horse-races, ridottos—and opera singers.

To return to the London operatic début of Anna Storace, Kelly made a temporary enemy by extolling her merits to a rival singer, the great Madame Mara (1749–1833)—Gertrude Schmeling, of Cassel, who excelled in the oratorios of Handel, then being rendered at Drury Lane. One evening in the green-room of the theatre, Dr. Arnold, who was with Madame Mara, said, apropos of the coming débutante, " Pray, Mr. Kelly, tell us what sort of singer is Signora Storace ? " He replied that in his opinion she was the best vocalist in Europe—meaning of the operatic school. But Madame Mara was deeply offended at this praise given to a new rival, declaring that Kelly was an impertinent coxcomb, and that she would not sing with him if she could possibly avoid doing so. However, she had the mortification of finding both Kelly and Storace engaged to sing with her, Miss Abrams, Miss Poole, Rubinelli, James Bartleman, John Sale (at this date a lay vicar at Windsor), Thomas Norris (organist of Christ Church, Oxford), and other leading vocalists at the Handel Commemoration Festival, held in Westminster Abbey during the early summer of this year, 1787. Kelly relates :

" The last grand performances were on the 28th and 31st of May, the 1st and 4th of June : upon those four mornings I sang there, but to give an idea of the effect of that magnificent festival is far beyond my power. . . . I can only endeavour to express the effect which it produced on *me*. When I first heard the chorus of the Hallelujah, in *The Messiah*, and ' For unto us a child is born,' my blood thrilled with rapturous delight ; it was sublime, it was, in the inspired words of the chorus, ' Wonderful.' The orchestra was led by the Cramers ; the conductors were Joah Bates, father of the present secretary of the Tax Office, Doctors Arnold and Dupuis. The band consisted of several hundreds of performers, and the choruses were collected from all parts of England, amounting to hundreds of voices. The performers unanimously exerted their great talents to admiration; but what made an everlasting impression on me was the powerful effect produced by Madame Mara in the sublime recitative, 'Sing ye to the Lord, for he hath triumphed gloriously': in that

Her voice was heard around,
Loud as a trumpet with a silver sound.

"I have often sung with her the recitative tenor part, 'And Miriam the Prophetess took a timbrel in her hand'; and never heard her but with increased delight.

"The King, Queen, and all the Royal Family, sat opposite the orchestra; the body of the church, the galleries, and every corner crowded with beauty, rank, and fashion: such was the rage to procure seats that ladies had their hair dressed the night previous, to be ready to get to the Abbey in good time. No place could be more appropriate to give effect to the divine strains of Handel than the spacious Abbey. His Majesty's partiality for Handel's music was generally spoken of; but I believe it was not generally known what an excellent and accurate judge he was of its merits. The fine chorus of 'Lift up your heads, O ye gates,' was always given in full chorus, and, indeed, intended to be so given by Handel. The King suggested that the first part of it should be made a semi-chorus and sung only by the principal singers; but when it came to the passage, 'He is the King of Glory!' he commanded that the whole orchestra, with the full chorus, should, with a tremendous forte, burst out; the effect produced by the alteration was awful and sublime. A strange coincidence happened at one of the performances: the morning, during part of the grand selection, was cloudy and lowering; but when the grand chorus struck up, 'Let there be light, and light was over all!' the sun burst forth, and with its rays illuminated every part of the splendid edifice."

Four years later, Nature again supplied effects when Madame Mara, Mrs. Crouch, Samuel Harrison (1760–1812), and Kelly were singing in *The Messiah* at York:

"One of the most awful accompaniments to the inspired music of Handel was furnished by the hand of Nature. On Monday night, the 15th of August, 1791, during the grand chorus, 'He gave them hail-stones for rain,' a storm, almost unparalleled in the memory of man, burst in all its violence over the rooms; the flashing of lightning and the loud peals of thunder were magnificently awful. The great room, almost crowded to suffocation, being surrounded with windows, which were opened to admit what little air there was, appeared full of blue flame; never before or since did I behold such a tremendous sight—such bursts of Heaven's artillery, and such sheets of fire, combined with the sacred words and the majestic music of the mighty master, were altogether appalling and magnificent."

It is pleasant to add that Madame Mara's dislike and antagonism to Kelly were soon vanquished, and she became his very good friend by reason of a trivial act of courtesy on his part. One oratorio night he chanced to go into the green-room where Madame Mara was talking to her intimate friend, Monsieur Ponté, first French horn-player to the King of Prussia (Frederick the Great), and a very fine performer. He was about to play a concerto in the oratorio, and said to Madame Mara in German: "My dear friend, my lips are so parched with fear that I am sure I shall not be able to make a sound with the instrument; I would give the world for a little water or beer to moisten my lips." To which Madame Mara replied in the same language: "There is nobody here to send—and yet if I knew where to get something for you to drink, I would go myself."

During this dialogue, Kelly was standing by the fire-side, and, addressing Madame Mara in German, he said: "Madame, I should be sorry for you to have that trouble, and I sit lazy by; I will, with great pleasure, go and get Monsieur Ponté some porter." He immediately dispatched a messenger for a foaming pot, which, as soon as it arrived, he presented to the thirsty horn-blower, just in the nick of time, for in another moment he was called upon to play his concerto. Madame Mara desired Kelly to accept her warmest thanks for his attentions to her friend, and to call upon her the next day at two o'clock. He accordingly went, when she very honestly told him that at a first sight she had taken a violent dislike to him, but that Kelly's kindness and courtesy to her timid and thirsty friend on the preceding evening had fully convinced her of how much she had misjudged him.

She apologised, and concluded her *amende tres honorable* by saying : " It was never my intention to appear on the English stage ; yet if you think my playing for your benefit, for the first and only time, will be of service to you, I beg you will command me. Kelly, of course, thankfully accepted her offer. Madame chose Dr. Thomas Arne's opera of *Artaxerxes*,[1] with the following cast:

Artaxerxes . .	*Mr. Dignum*
Arbaces . .	*Mrs. Crouch*
Artabanes . .	*Mr. Kelly*
Semira . .	*Mrs. Foster*
Mandane . .	*Madame Mara*

Her appearance in opera caused a sensation, and brought the biggest receipts hitherto known at Drury Lane, for the whole of the pit, with the exception of two benches, was railed into boxes. " So much for a little German proficiency, a little common civility, and a pot of porter."

This was in 1788, and we must now return to 1787, when after the conclusion of the season at Drury Lane, Kelly, in the company of Mr. and Mrs. Crouch, set forth in a travelling carriage on June 8th for Dublin, where they arrived on the 12th. The Crouches went to lodgings on College Green, and Kelly to his father's house in Abbey Street. Sad to relate, his mother had died since his arrival in England, but owing to his professional engagements he had been unable to get to Ireland sooner, so he never saw her again, to tell her all the wonderful things that had happened to him since he left her eight years before, as a boy of sixteen, to seek his fortune in Italy. But he was, of course, delighted to see his father, his sister, and his brothers, Joe and Mark. On June 22nd he appeared once more in Dublin, in *Lionel and Clarissa,* though Lionel now sang tenor instead of the powerful soprano which was his gift eight years earlier ; and Mrs. Crouch was now the Clarissa. For these twelve performances, Kelly never received less than £50 a night, and the house overflowed on the occasion of his clear benefit. The Lord Lieutenant, the Duke of Rutland, with the beautiful Duchess of Rutland, were present at two of the performances.

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[1] Arne composed *Artaxerxes* in 1762. Its production at Covent Garden Theatre the following year was marked by a riot, owing to the management refusing to admit people at half price in the middle of the evening. A rare print of the scene is in existence. Charles Lamb saw a later production of this piece at Drury Lane in 1780–1, when, as a little boy of five or six, he experienced the first magic of the Theatre. He wrote in the Elian essay, *My First Play* : " When we got in, and I beheld the green curtain that veiled a heaven to my imagination, which was soon to be disclosed—the breathless anticipation I endured. . . . The curtain drew up—I was not past six years old, and the play was *Artaxerxes*. . . . All feeling was absorbed in vision. Gorgeous vests, gardens, palaces, princesses, passed before me. I knew not players. . . . It was all enchantment and a dream. No such pleasure has since visited me but in dreams. . . . That old *Artaxerxes* evening has never done ringing in my ears." In all probability Lamb saw Mrs. Crouch that night in her original rôle of Mandane ; her later assumption of the masculine part of Arbaces was unsuited to her personality. As an eye-witness observed, " She certainly was too delicately beautiful to impersonate a male character."

At this date, Joseph George Holman was acting in Dublin, and it was arranged that he should appear as Comus in *The Masque of Comus,* with Kelly as the principal Bacchanal, singing " Now Phœbus sinketh in the West" and several other songs. Mrs. Crouch was the Euphrosyne, and, her devout admirer says, " looked as lovely as if she had been bathed in the Fountain of the Graces." Her acting and charming singing of " The Wanton God," " Would Ye Take the Noontide Air ? " and " Sweet Echo," were much applauded. In the first act of the *Masque,* Kelly introduced a new duet for himself and Mrs. Crouch ; this was Martini's " Pace, cara mia sposa," which created a greater sensation in Dublin than it had even in Vienna. The English words put to it commenced " Oh, thou wert born to please me, my life, my only love." The duet had an immense success in Dublin, and seems to be one of the first recorded instances of popular melodies sung and whistled by the Boy in the Street :

" No piece of music ever produced a greater effect ; it was always called for three times ; it was sung about the streets by the ballad-singers, and parodied by the news-boys, who used to sing to each other, ' Oh, thou wert born to tease me, my life, my only love.' In short, it was completely the rage all over Ireland, England, and Scotland for many, many years."

After some happy days in his native country, spent in visits to friends and in excursions to Clontarf, Black Rock, and Dargle (Lord Powerscourt's picturesque place), Kelly and Mrs. Crouch departed for Holyhead, and so to York, where they were engaged to appear during the August Race Week. Here they appeared in *Lionel and Clarissa,* with Betterton (father of Mrs. Julia Glover) as Jessamy, while Colonel Oldboy was played by the eccentric Tate Wilkinson, manager of the theatre. Wilkinson was a great epicure, very fond of French cookery and small garnished dishes ; the roast beef and Yorkshire pudding of the county of his birth or adoption he abominated in particular. So Kelly, ever full of jest, resolved to play a trick on his new manager at their first meeting, and got the Crouches to invite Wilkinson to dine with them on the evening of their arrival. They got to the inn at York just at supper-time. Kelly saw in the larder a huge round of beef ; he ordered it up, and had it put on the table before him ; he pulled off his coat and waistcoat, and tucked up the sleeves of his shirt, unbuttoned his collar, took off his cravat, and put on a red woollen nightcap; thus disrobed, and with a large carving-knife in his hand, he was gazing with seeming delight on the round of beef at the moment Manager Wilkinson, to whom Mrs. Crouch had previously sent, entered the house. He had never seen Kelly ; he went up to Mrs. Crouch and congratulated her on her arrival in York. Turning from her, he espied Kelly and, starting back, exclaimed, " Ugh ! Ma'am, who is that with the enormous round of beef before him ? How the devil came he here, ma'am ? " Mrs. Crouch said, with a serious countenance, " That is Mr. Kelly, whom you have engaged to sing with me." " What, that figure ! " said Tate. " What, that my Lord Aimworth—my Lionel—my Young Meadows ! Ugh ! send him away, ma'am, send him back to Drury Lane ! send him to Vienna ! I never can produce such a thing as that to a York audience, ma'am ! " While he was abusing the bad taste of the Drury Lane managers and those of Vienna, Kelly slipped out of the room, dressed himself and, in *propriâ personâ*, was introduced to Tate, who participated in the joke and laughed heartily, and ever after they were the greatest friends.

The company went on to Leeds, and played there for four nights in *The Maid of the Mill* (Mrs. Crouch was the Patty, and Kelly the Lord Aimworth), *Love in a Village*, *The Duenna*, and *Lionel and Clarissa*. Another four nights were played at Wakefield, where Kelly had experience of that ribald discourtesy of a certain section of Yorkshire quality which had likewise laughed at and interrupted John Philip Kemble when he acted at York in 1778. Kelly thus relates his adventure at Wakefield :

"We arrived there on Wednesday, September 5th, and appeared in *Love in a Village.* The house was thinly attended, but in the stage-box sat a lady, who made such a terrible noise, throwing herself into all kinds of attitudes, indulging ever and anon in horrid laughing, that she disconcerted every person who came upon the stage, but, above all, I in particular appeared to be the object of her ridicule, and I confess I felt extremely hurt at her pointed rudeness. In the third act, when Young Meadows resumes his real character, and comes into the garden to meet Rosetta, I took out my watch to look at the hour, and sung, 'I Wonder this Girl does not Come'; the fat lady in the stage-box instantly set off in a horse-laugh, and said to those around her, loud enough to be heard in the gallery, 'Why, look there; la! the fellow has got a watch.' I could not bear this; I admit I lost my temper; but I walked up to the box and said, 'Yes, madam, it is a gold watch, and reckoned one of the best in England,' putting it close to her. My friend Fawcett was standing at the side of the stage at the time, and often since has spoken of it. The lady was violently hissed, and ever after when she came to the theatre conducted herself with becoming decency. The same lady, I was told, behaved one night so rudely to Mr. John Kemble that he was obliged to address her from the stage, and say that he could not proceed with his part unless she would cease interrupting him with her noise. The audience insisted on her leaving the box; a party of her friends took her part, and wanted Kemble to apologise to her, which he refused to do, and left the theatre."

An extra night was played at Wakefield by the express desire of the Earl of Scarborough, who had showed the actors many marks of polite attention. They then returned to London, and on September 23rd, 1787, Linley revived the musical piece, *Selima and Azor*, with splendid scenery and decorations. Mrs. Crouch was inimitable as Selima, and sang the favourite song of "No Flower that Blows is like the Rose" in a manner to secure a nightly encore. Kelly played Azor, the same part in which he had appeared in Grétry's version of the opera at Gratz. On one of his off nights during the London run, Kelly had what is now called a busman's holiday, and visited the Italian Opera House, in the Haymarket. On leaving, he had another of his experiences which, beginning unfavourably, ended happily:

"It was a dreadful stormy night, and rained incessantly. I was lucky enough to get a hackney-coach, and, while waiting for its drawing up to the door, I heard two very handsome young women lamenting that they could procure no conveyance; after apologising for my presumption, I told them that I had one in waiting, and should be happy to have the pleasure of offering them seats in it, an offer which with many thanks they accepted. We got into the coach, and the coachman was directed to drive to John Street,[1] Fitzroy Square. The ladies, naturally enough, began to speak about the opera and public places; among other things, one of them asked me if I had seen Mr. Kelly, the new singer at Drury Lane. I replied very often. 'My sister and I went to see him the other night,' said the young lady, 'and we have set him down as one of the most affected, conceited fellows we ever beheld. He strutted about the stage like a peacock, and as to his singing, how an audience could applaud it I cannot imagine. Do you not think him execrable, sir?' 'Most certainly,' said I. 'I have a very mean opinion of him.' 'And then the puppy,' continued my fair friend, 'is so ugly, he is a perfect fright. Do you not think so, sir?' 'Indeed,' said I, 'I do not think that, for I am rather partial to his personal appearance, and like his countenance as well as I do my own. But pray,' continued I, 'in what character might you have seen this frightful fellow?' 'In *Selima and Azor*, I think they call it,' said her sister; 'but we were so tired and disgusted with it, that we came away at the end of the first act.' 'Well, ladies,' said I, 'if you had stopped until the end of the piece, and seen Mr. Kelly with his mask off, you would have seen him assume the appearance of a prince, and perhaps not have thought him so very frightful.' By this time the coach had reached their door, and, returning many thanks for my civility in seeing them home, they told me they should be very happy if any morning I would favour them with a call, and asked me for my address. I gave it, upon which they both actually shrieked with horror, and asked a thousand pardons for the rudeness of which they had been innocently guilty. I laughed heartily at the little contretemps, and took my leave, but returned the next day, and formed an intimacy with them which lasted many years, during which I received the greatest hospitality and kindness from them. One of them was the wife of a wealthy merchant, the other unmarried, but both were charming and agreeable women."

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[1] John Street is now called Whitfield Street. At the time Kelly writes of, this was a new residential district. Fitzroy Square was only begun about 1790, when the south and east sides were designed by the Adam brothers. The remaining sides followed later; in 1815 Fitzroy Square was still described as unfinished.

At this date, Kelly was making many new friends, among them his humorous fellow-countryman, Father O'Leary, the Roman Catholic priest, who had come from Cork to act as chaplain to the Spanish Embassy in London.[1] O'Leary had a great partiality for whisky-punch and corned mutton, and so had John Philip Curran; and on one memorable night, when the two were dining with Kelly, after much application of St. Patrick's eye-water, the locks of Irish wit were opened in flood. Said Curran to O'Leary, "Reverend Father, I wish you were St. Peter, for you would have the keys of heaven, and you could let me in." "By my honour and conscience," replied the priest, "it would be better for *you* that I had the keys of the Other Place, for then I could let you *out*." Curran much relished the jest, which he admitted had a great deal of truth in it.

O'Leary related to them the signal and unusual triumph he once achieved in a verbal conflict with Dr. Johnson. He had a desire to meet the redoubtable scholar, and was taken by a friend, Mr. Murphy, to the Doctor's lodgings. Johnson was in one of his illest moods, and looked the stranger up and down, without saying a word for some time. At length he made some observation to O'Leary in the Hebrew tongue, to which the priest could offer no reply. "Why do you not answer me, sir?" demanded Johnson. "Faith, sir," said O'Leary, "I cannot reply to you, because I do not understand the language in which you are addressing me." Upon this, Johnson, with a contemptuous sneer, turned to Murphy, and said, "Why, sir, this is a pretty fellow you have brought hither; sir, he does not comprehend the primitive language." O'Leary immediately bowed very low, and complimented the Doctor with a long speech in Irish, to which Johnson, not understanding a word, made no reply, but looked at Murphy with a baffled and infuriated expression. Then O'Leary, pointing to Johnson, said to Murphy, " This is a pretty fellow to whom you have brought me; sir, he does not understand the language of the sister kingdom."

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[1] Arthur O'Leary (1729–1802) had been a Capuchin friar at St. Malo. He ever advised Catholics in Ireland to be loyal to English rule, and was in receipt of a pension from the British Government to reveal the secrets of disaffected Papists.

At the house of his friend, Jack Johnstone, in Great Russell Street, Kelly met another eccentric Irishman, named Long, who was an auctioneer turned dramatist, and author of *The Laplanders*. He was full of quaint schemes, and had come to England now to try and make the Government listen to his plan for paying off the National Debt. One of his amusing stories concerned a stage-struck saddler in Dublin, named Lennan, who insisted on acting Major O'Flaherty in *The West Indian* of Cumberland, in which he was truly execrable. After his performance, he repaired to the Cockle Club, where he repeated some of his exhibition as O'Flaherty. Isaac Sparks, the President of the Club, and Jack Long made the poor man very drunk, and then gave him in charge for having murdered Major O'Flaherty. The watch kept the saddler a prisoner all night, and the next morning he was a wiser man, vowing in future that he would stick to the making of saddles, and would murder majors no more, even on the stage.

Kelly became a great friend of the comic actor, William Parsons (1736–95), known as The Comic Roscius, and who seems to have been an early exemplar of that reprehensible trick on the stage of making jokes and allusions to the other actors playing with him, private jests quite incomprehensible to the audience. Kelly relates of " that exquisite actor, Parsons " :

" To him I was particularly partial, and he, I may venture to say, was very partial to me. I have repeatedly dined with him in a bandbox of a house which he had near the Asylum at Lambeth ; it was an odd place for an asthmatic comedian to live in, for it was opposite a stagnant ditch ; he called it Frog Hall.[1] In his little drawing-room were several beautiful landscapes, painted by himself ; he was reckoned a very good artist. Amongst his little peculiarities was a fondness for fried tripe, which, almost nightly, after the play, he went to enjoy at an eating-house in Little Russell Street, nearly opposite the stage-door of Drury Lane Theatre, whither I used very often to accompany him; and night after night have we been *tête-à-tête* there. . . .

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[1] Lambeth Marsh covered to a great extent the present site of Waterloo Station and its environs.

"Parsons, when on the stage with John Palmer and James Aickin, used to make it a point to set them off laughing, and scarcely ever failed in his object. One evening, over our fried tripe, I was condemning them for indulging their laughing propensities on the stage, and said I thought it was positively disrespectful to the audience. 'For my own part,' said I, 'I enjoy your comicalities and humour as much as anyone, when in the front of the house; but, were I on the stage with you, nothing that you could do would make me so far forget the character I was acting as to indulge in misplaced mirth.' 'Do you think so?' said he; 'well, perhaps you are right.'

"Five or six nights after this conversation, we were acting in *The Doctor and the Apothecary.*[1] I was to sing a song to him, beginning 'This marriage article, in every particle, is free from flaw, sir.' A full chord was given from the orchestra to pitch the key; just as it was given, and I was going to begin the song, he called out to Shaw, the leader, 'Stop, Stop!' and, putting his head into my face, and kicking up his heels (a favourite action of his), he drove me from one end of the stage to the other, crying out all the time, 'I'll be hanged if you shall ever have any more fried tripe, no more fried tripe, no more fried tripe,' and completely pushed me off the stage. I could not resist this unexpected attack, and naturally burst out laughing. The audience were in a roar of laughter too, for it was enough that he held up his finger or his heel to make *them* laugh. When he got off, he said, 'I think you must own, my serious lad, that I have conquered.' Then, taking me by the hand, he dragged me upon the stage to the spot whence he had before driven me, and, looking down into the orchestra, said, 'Now, sirs, begin,' which they did, and I sang my song, which was much applauded. But the audience were, of course, ignorant of the joke of the fried tripe, or what he meant by it: however, he is gone, poor fellow, and many a pleasant hour have I enjoyed in his society."

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[1] This was Stephen Storace's first opera (the story adapted from Dittersdorf's *Doktor und Apotheker* by James Cobb) to be produced in England.

Parsons died quite suddenly, his constitution undermined, no doubt, by the amphibious situation of his house and his too free indulgence in the favourite food of Jiggs. He played Sir Fretful Plagiary on January 19th and was dead on February 3rd, 1795. Dibdin wrote his epitaph:

Here Parsons lies—oft on Life's busy stage
With Nature, reader, you have seen him vie;
He friendship knew—knew science—knew the age;
Respected knew to live—lamented die.

Parsons's second wife was Dorothy Stewart, daughter of the Honourable James Stewart, and niece of the seventh Earl of Galloway, who ran away from a convent at Lille to marry him. They had a son, and a young clergyman was engaged as a tutor for the boy, and engaged the mother's affections soon after. For when poor Parsons died, his widow married the tutor four days later, with the strange situation, as Dr. Doran puts it, "that she had two husbands in the house: one dead and the other living. The first had left her a fortune. The second spent it, and left herself and her son destitute."

The annals of Drury Lane at the close of 1787 must not omit the unromantic marriage of John Philip Kemble, though, curiously enough, Kelly makes no allusion to the matter. There was in the Company an actress, a young widow, named Priscilla Brereton, daughter of Hopkins, the Prompter of the theatre, and an actress also employed there. One day the daughter said to Mrs. Hopkins, "My dear mother, I cannot guess what Mr. Kemble means: he passed me just now, going up to his dressing-room, and, chucking me under the chin, said, 'Ha, Pop! I shouldn't wonder if you were soon to hear something very much to your advantage.' What could he mean?" "Mean," replied her astute parent, "why, he means to propose marriage." And it actually was so, despite the rage of Mrs. Siddons, who had more ambitious designs for the mating of her brilliant brother—"perhaps she looked with anxious hope to a consanguinity with the noble house of Greathead," her friends and former employers at Guy's Cliff. Kemble was casual enough on the day of his wedding with the young woman whom he had condescended to honour. On this December morning of 1787, Mrs. Hopkins and the bride walked with their friends, Jack Bannister and his wife, from Frith Street, Soho, to Kemble's house in Caroline Street, Bedford Square, to breakfast with the bridegroom, "who did not seem to expect them." However, two hackney-coaches were called, and the party went to church, where the marriage was performed by Parson D'Este. The bride then snatched a hasty dinner, and departed with Mr. Bannister to perform in *The West Indian*[1] at Drury Lane, while Kemble remained to dine, and take his wine, with Mrs. Bannister at her house in Frith Street (what became of poor Mrs. Hopkins, the bride's mother, is not clear, but apparently no dinner or wine was available for her). When Mrs. Kemble returned from the theatre, her husband took her back to his house in Caroline Street. On December 14th, Kemble and his wife played together at Drury Lane in the parts of Sir Giles and his daughter Margaret—"the delicate audience seizing on a marked passage in the play, and laughing as they applauded to indicate they knew all about it. Sir Giles remained grave and self-possessed."

At Drury Lane in February, 1788, was produced *Love in the East, or the Adventures of Twelve Hours*, written by Cobb, with music by Linley, with Kelly as Warnford, supported by Baddeley, John Bannister, Dignum, King, Aickin, Mrs. Crouch, Miss Romanzini, and the celebrated Miss Pope as Mrs. Mushroom. In October of the same year Kelly and Mrs. Crouch sang in another musical piece at Drury Lane, adapted from the German, *The Doctor and the Apothecary*[2], while in May they appeared respectively as the King and Matilda in a revival of *Richard Cœur de Lion*. Also in the summer of 1788, Kelly and Mrs. Crouch played with great success in Liverpool, Chester,

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[1] *The West Indian*, though written in 1771, gives amusing evidence of how the older generation then, as ever, criticised the pert and forward manners of the Girl of the Period. Lady Rusport thus addresses Charlotte, as might Mrs. Lynn Linton in 1868, or Mrs. Kendal in 1930 : "You're strangely pert ; but 'tis no wonder . . . according to the modern style of education you was brought up. It was not so in my young days ; there was then some decorum in the world, some subordination, as the great Locke expresses it. . . . But in this forward age we have coquettes in the egg-shell, and philosophers in the cradle ; girls of fifteen that lead the fashion in new caps and new opinions, that have their sentiments and their sensations."

[2] See *ante*, p. 160.

Manchester, Worcester (during the race week), and Birmingham. In London, too, a curious production called *Shakespeare's Jubilee* was revived. All the performers, impersonating the different characters from the plays, walked in a procession. Mrs. Siddons was the Tragic Muse, and Miss Farren the Comic Muse. Kelly represented Benedick and danced along with Miss Pope as Beatrice, both wearing masks. He sang some lines written by Alderman Samuel Birch (1757-1841), who became Lord Mayor of London in 1814, and whose famous pastrycook's shop on Cornhill survived until recent years. Birch was a dramatist in the intervals of his trading and civic work, and wrote *The Adopted Child*, *The Mariners*, and *The Smugglers*. His lines sung by Kelly extolled Garrick, who had died ten years previously :

The cypress and yew-tree for sorrow renowned,
And tear-dropping willow shall near thee be found ;
All Nature shall droop, and united complain,
For Shakespeare in Garrick hath died o'er again.

Jane Pope (1742-1818), the greatest of soubrettes and the only successor to Kitty Clive (her friend and instructress), had some occasion for annoyance with Kelly at one of the representations of this Shakspere Masque :

"Moody[1] came to me one evening, and requested I would lend my domino and mask to a friend of his, who wished to see the audience from the stage, and who would do exactly as I did, having frequently seen me and Miss Pope. On he went, but appeared instantly planet struck, and stood perfectly still ; nor did he move until pushed off. The rage and disappointment of Miss Pope, who was an excellent dancer (and I not a very bad one) at not receiving the applause which she had always brought was very great ; she stormed and raged and vowed vengeance against poor me. I wrote to her in the morning, asking her pardon, and signed myself '*The Fair Penitent*.' She took the letter in good part, and wrote me a friendly answer, admonishing me to be guarded against bad advisers ; and to the day of her death was kindly attentive to me, but she never forgave Moody, by whose request I had transgressed."

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[1] John Moody (1727–1812), the comic actor. See later p. 319–323.

Miss Pope at the time of her frustrated dance with Kelly was near fifty years of age, but still, no doubt, in the earlier words of Churchill:

With all the native vigour of sixteen,
Among the merry groups conspicuous seen,
See lively Pope advance to jig and trip
Corinna, Cherry, Honeycombe, and Snip.
Not without art, but yet to nature true,
She charms the town with humour, just, yet new.

In October, 1789, Kelly and Mrs. Crouch appeared at Drury Lane in Dryden's adaptation of *The Tempest*, with music by Linley. They enacted respectively the parts of Ferdinand and Miranda, and re-introduced, "with great applause," their famous duet, "Oh Thou wert Born to Please Me,"[1] from the Italian. "Mr. Kelly evinced feeling and judgment throughout the character, particularly when he is supposed to have slain Hyppolito," who was played by Mrs. Goodall, "a fine figure in male attire." Miss Farren was the Dorinda, and she and Mrs. Crouch were dressed alike: "Their dresses were white, ornamented with spotted furs; coral beads adorned their heads, necks, and arms. They looked beautiful, and rendered the characters uncommonly interesting." However, the most astonishing feature of this Shakspere-up-to-date was the epilogue, written by the energetic veteran, General Burgoyne (who begat an illegitimate son at the age of sixty, and wrote his most successful play, *The Heiress*, four years later). This epilogue was "spoken by the enchanting Farren," and its eulogy of the Prince of Wales might well have dried up, as with fire, the ink-wells of Messrs. Greville, Thackeray, and Bradlaugh ere they raised their pens in disparagement of George IV:

High o'er the crowd, inflamed with patriot fire,
Pure as the virtues that endear his Sire.
See one who leads, as mutual trials prove,
A band of brothers to a people's love:
One, who on station scorns to found controul,
But gains pre-eminence by worth of soul.

[1] See *ante*, p. 154.

These are the honours that, on Reason's plan,
Adorn the Prince, and vindicate the Man ;
While gayer passions, warmed at Nature's breast,
Play o'er his youth—the feathers of his crest.

In the following month, Kelly enacted the Man in the Iron Mask in a play entitled *The Isle of St. Marguerite*, by the Honourable Henry St. John (a son of Lord Bolingbroke). Bannister made a great success with his songs and the prologue, while Mrs. Crouch of course had a part, Caroline, for she would only now appear in plays where she could act with Kelly. Apart from her affection for him, her singing had much improved from his tuition of the Italian mode. As her memoirist expresses it :

" From the time Mr. Kelly came to England, she was more satisfied with her singing than she was before, and she seemed to acquire courage from his presence on the stage with her. One season an attempt was made by her relations to engage her for the summer at a different theatre from that where Mr. Kelly was to perform ; but she told them that it was in vain to engage her at any other theatre, as her voice was in her own power, and she was firmly resolved *not to sing* without him. Her salary was too great an object to be given up, and her friends, however reluctantly, were compelled, by imperious necessity, to acquiesce : for those who looked up to her for the means of existence, when unable to obtain it for themselves from age and infirmities, were not in a state to exert much authority ; she indulged them in every comfort of life which they could possibly enjoy ; she behaved to them with duty and affection in every point but that *one* in which she was *resolute*. Mr. Kelly always behaved to her relations with such attention and kindness that it was impossible for them not to feel an affection for him."

So was gilded the pill of parental and auntly scruple, and Kelly henceforth was received and accepted as an integral part of Mrs. Crouch's life and house by her nearest relatives.

Kelly's leave of absence from the Imperial Opera at Vienna had by now expired ; he had received his salary punctually through the Austrian Embassy in London. But he now wrote to Count Rosenberg " a respectful letter, requesting him to lay before His Majesty the Emperor my humble duty and grateful thanks for the many bounties bestowed upon me, but that my father's state of health, and his wish for me to stay in England, induced me to remain there: this was my excuse; but there were other reasons more potent than filial duty for my not returning to dear Vienna: had I gone, and remained ten years, I should have had half my salary for the remainder of my life, and have been allowed to retire with ease and comfort; but, as his Grace of Bedford's motto sayeth, 'Che sara, sara,' and I cannot be expected *now* to account for my conduct *then*." Whereby it may be permissible to deduce that Mrs. Crouch was the reason for his remaining in England.

At the time, too, he was no doubt swayed by the desire to appear in the new opera by his friend, Stephen Storace, *The Haunted Tower*, the words by Cobb,[1] which was produced on November 24th, 1789, at Drury Lane. In this piece Kelly created the part of Lord William, and he had the delight of singing with his two dearest friends, Mrs. Crouch and Nancy Storace:

"The success of this opera was never surpassed; it was a lasting favourite for many years; the first season it was played fifty nights. The under-plot was taken from an Italian intermezzo opera; the entire scene of the Baron of Oakland reading a letter was taken from it. Storace was greatly received in Adela, both as a singer and an actress. Bannister and Baddeley were excellent in the comic parts; Mrs. Crouch, as Lady Elinor, was in the full bloom of beauty, and the richest voice. I had two fine songs allotted to me, 'From Hope's Fond Dream,' and 'Spirit of My Sainted Sire,' one of the most difficult songs ever composed for a tenor voice.[2] Indeed, all the music was beautiful.

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[1] James Cobb (1756–1818) was a clerk in the office of the East India Company. He was the author of twenty-four plays and light operas. Genest says, "If they had been burned, their loss would not have been very great." However, they suited the taste of the time and were very popular. One of the best of his pieces was *The Humourist* (1785), in which John Bannister made a great success. James Cobb also wrote the English version of *The Doctor and the Apothecary*, Storace's first opera in England.

[2] M. J. Young states: "The Lord William of Mr. Kelly is an excellent piece of acting: he renders the character throughout dignified and interesting. The manner in which he sings 'Spirit of My Sainted Sire' is extremely impressive; the audience always feel, applaud, and encore it. Signora Storace and Mr. Bannister, in Edward and Adela, are inimitable; they are everything which the

The admiration of the audience of the *sestetto*, 'By Mutual Love Delighted,' I can never forget; certainly, nothing could exceed the composition or the execution of it—both were perfect."

Robert Baddeley (1733–94), who played the part of the Baron of Oakland in *The Haunted Tower*, was the actor who left a sum of money to provide a Twelfth Night Cake and wine for the delectation of the Drury Lane theatrical company every year, a festival which is still celebrated, in the green-room (or what now passes for such) on January 6th, though the character of the old theatre and the plays now produced there are so entirely different from the scheme of things in the great days of the premier playhouse. Baddeley was the last of the actors to wear the uniform of scarlet and gold, prescribed by right as the costume to be worn by the members of the patent or royal theatre, for such actors were literally "His Majesty's Servants." Some actors, with mock humility, still style themselves the "humble servants of the public"—Irving habitually used the tag when called before the curtain—but, since the players have yearned after a wider outside publicity, they have strayed into realms where their great predecessors would be amazed to find themselves. Robert Baddeley naturally gave a cake by way of a hostage to posterity, for in his earlier days he had been a cook, as well as valet to a gentleman on his grand tour. Baddeley was cook to Samuel Foote, and hence gravitated to the stage, where he created the part of Moses in *The School for Scandal.* Kelly says of Baddeley:

"An excellent cook he was, to my knowledge, and, moreover, extremely proud of his skill in the culinary art. He told me once, that when he was acting at the Haymarket, of which Foote was the proprietor, they had a quarrel, and Baddeley challenged him to fight with swords, when Foote cried, 'Hey! what! fight! Oh! the dog! So I have taken the spit from my kitchen-fire, and stuck it by his side; and now the fellow wants to stick *me*

playful characters require, and can never be excelled. Mrs. Bland, in Cicely, has lost none of these pleasing manners and sweet notes which charmed when she was Romanzini." Maria Romanzini (1769–1838) was an arch little Jewess, of Italian origin, who had married Mrs. Jordan's brother, George Bland, in that same year. Leigh Hunt writes of "Mrs. Bland, the favourite little singer, with a voice like her name, and a short, thick person, and dark face to match, whom her sweet ballads made ever welcome." In her last years she suffered from melancholia.

with it.' He had a habit of smacking his lips always when speaking. In allusion to this, Charles Bannister said to him one day at the School of Garrick, when he was boasting of his culinary qualifications, 'My dear Baddeley, everybody must know that you have been a cook, for you always seem to be tasting your words.' On the evening before his death (November 20th, 1794), he was taken ill as he was dressing for the character of Moses, in *The School for Scandal*, which part was originally written for him. His Canton, in *The Clandestine Marriage*, will ever be remembered, and in Jews and Frenchmen he was very good. He was a worthy man, although he was nick-named Old Vinegar, but only from the excellent manner in which he acted a character of that name in O'Keefe's farce of *The Son-in-Law*. He bequeathed his house and premises at Upper Molesey, in Surrey, to Mrs. Baddeley; and after her death these and money arising from an annuity to the Theatrical Fund of Drury Lane Theatre; the house and premises belonging to it at Molesey to be an asylum for decayed actors. The house stands facing the Temple of Shakespeare on Mr. Garrick's Lawn at Hampton. The trustees of the fund, however, thought proper to sell it; and it has been purchased and is now in the possession of my friend, Mr. Savory, of Bond Street, at whose hospitable table I have many times been a welcome guest. In his parlour is an excellent likeness of Baddeley in the character of Moses in *The School for Scandal*, painted by Zoffany, and on a part of the premises are the boards of the old Drury Lane stage on which the immortal Garrick displayed his unrivalled powers. It seems no unnatural coincidence that the *ci-devant* cook's property should have found a savoury purchaser."

The great success of *The Haunted Tower*[1] must have entirely realised the youthful dreams of triumph entertained by the Storaces and Kelly when they first met nine years before, for here was Stephen's opera acclaimed at the leading theatre in London, and his sister and his best friend singing two of the leading parts. At this period, Kelly's vocal gifts were at their best. Boaden says:

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[1] *The Haunted Tower* was revived at the Lyceum in 1809, at Drury Lane again in 1816, and at Covent Garden in 1832. The only modern revival seems to have been by the Mayfair Dramatic Club, at the Guildhall School of Music, in May, 1922. The song "The Roast Beef of Old England" occurs in this opera.

"His voice had amazing power and steadiness, his compass was extraordinary. In vigorous passages he never cheated the ear with the feeble wailings of falsetto, but sprung upon the ascending fifth with a sustaining energy that often electrified an audience. Some will remember an instance of this in the air sung only by himself, 'Spirit of My Sainted Sire,' where the fifth was upon the syllable *saint*. The Conservatoire at Naples, in which he passed five months of his youth, gave him all that science could add to his original love for the art ; and Aprile, the best master of any age, completed the studies of the young musician. He was soon versed in all the intricacies of the Italian conversation pieces and finales, and acquired the reputation upon the Continent of being an excellent tenor."

This season, too, Kelly sang at the Ancient Music Concerts as principal tenor, under the direction of the first Earl of Uxbridge (father of the first Marquis of Anglesey, of Waterloo fame), who requested him to sing on the night of his début "Jephtha's Rash Vow," and the Laughing Song from *L'Allegro*, "Haste Thee, Nymph, and Bring with Thee." These concerts were conducted by Joah Bates (1741–99) ; Wilhelm Cramer was the first violin, and Cervetto the principal violoncellist ; and they were held in Tottenham Street, where George III, Queen Charlotte, and the Royal Family constantly attended. Kelly's predecessor, Samuel Harrison (1760–1812), had sung the Laughing Song in the gravest manner, without the slightest suggestion of mirth or the twinkle of an eye. This method did not, of course, appeal to the gay and merry Kelly, who "determined, though it was a great risk, to sing it in my own way, and the effect produced justified the experiment : instead of singing it with the serious tameness of Harrison, I laughed all through it, as I conceived it ought to be sung, and as must have been the intention of the composer. The infection ran, and Their Majesties, and the whole audience, as well as the orchestra, were in a roar of laughter, and a signal was given from the Royal Box to repeat it, and I sang it again with increased effect. Mr. Bates assured me that if I had rehearsed it in the morning as I sang it at night, he would have prohibited my experiment. I sang it five times in the course of that season by special desire." He also sang at subscription concerts held, under the direction of Dr. Arnold, at Freemasons'

Hall, and known as The Academy of Ancient Music, where the supporters were principally bankers and merchants from the City.

In the summer of 1790, Kelly and Mrs. Crouch had a profitable season in Cork, Limerick, and Dublin, performing *The Haunted Tower* in the capital. The morning after the first rendering, hearing a news-boy bawling in the street, " Here is the high-born *Hibernian Journal! The Freeman's Journal*, and Saunder's *Great News*, and more to come! " Kelly, anxious to read what the papers said of his performance, opened the door of his father's house, called to the boy, and asked for *The Freeman's Journal.* " Sir," said the ragged youth, " I'm sorry, but I've sold the last I had." " Then," replied Kelly, " you stupid, if you have sold them all, why are you crying them about the street? " With an arch look, and scratching his head and staring straight at his questioner, the cheeky Irish boy said, " Practice makes perfect, Mr. Kelly; I do it just to keep myself in voice." And away he ran.

From Cork the singers went to Waterford to give a few performances. They stayed at Youghal with Mr. Robert Uniacke, whose guests also included the Marquis of Waterford and John Newport, the banker, created a baronet this year, and later Chancellor of the Irish Exchequer.

In October, 1789, Kelly was the principal tenor at the Norwich Musical Festival, and, apropos of his journey there, he gives a characteristic anecdote of the quaint comedian, John Palmer (1742–98), son of the door-keeper and bill-sticker at Drury Lane, and who is said to have excelled all others as Joseph Surface:

" The first performance was *The Messiah*, which I was to open on the Thursday morning. I was to quit town on the Tuesday, but on Monday night I received an order not on any account to leave London, for Mr. Sheridan had sent a peremptory message to have *Richard Cœur de Lion* performed on Wednesday, and against his decree there was no appeal. John Palmer, the excellent comedian, was with me when I received the message; he said to me, ' My valued friend, *Richard* will be over by eleven o'clock; if you choose to have a carriage and four horses at the door, you will get with ease to Norwich by twelve on Thursday, in time to open *The Messiah*. Norwich is the city that first cherished me, and where I married my beloved wife; how I should like to accompany you, if you would give me a seat in your chaise.' I said it would make me very happy to have the pleasure of his company. He told me he was perfectly acquainted with every inn on the road, and would write immediately to those where we were to change horses, to have relays prepared for us, that we might not meet with any delay on the road. I was much pleased with the promised arrangement, and wrote to Madame Mara that I should be at Norwich on Thursday in time, requesting her to secure two beds at the hotel where she was, one for my friend Palmer and one for myself.

"On Wednesday evening, as I was dressing for *Richard*, my friend Palmer came to me with the countenance of Joseph Surface and, sighing, said, 'My best of friends, this is the most awful period of my life. I cannot leave town, my beloved wife, the partner of my sorrows and my joys, is just confined.' I said, under such circumstances, of course I could not expect him to leave Mrs. Palmer, but I hoped there would be no mistake about the horses, which were ordered to be ready at each post. He sat down and deliberately wrote down the names of all the places where he had ordered them to be in readiness. About eleven o'clock, having merely taken off my *Richard's* dress, I got into the carriage, and, accompanied by a Scotsman, who was my valet and hairdresser, rattled off full speed to Epping, where we were first to change, at the inn marked down by my excellent friend. We knocked and bellowed for Mr. Palmer's horses; at last came the ostler; Mr. Palmer had no horses there; he had not sent any orders, nor did they even know who Mr. Palmer was.

"I never in the course of my life experienced a greater disappointment; in short, all the way down I had to wait for horses, as Palmer had not written to any one of the inns. However, the road was excellent, and, by paying the boys well, I got on at a capital pace without the smallest accident. It was market-day at Norwich, and as I drove in the good folks stared and wondered to see me getting my hair dressed in the carriage. However, I reached the church-door just as the overture to *The Messiah* was on the point of commencing. I took my seat in the orchestra, opened the oratorio, and never was in better voice, although naturally much fatigued. We had two more morning performances in the church, and three evening performances in the grand assembly-room. At the conclusion of the festival I returned to town, and, when I charged Palmer with neglect and deception, he swore that he had ordered all the horses exactly as he had stated. I thought it of no use to be at variance with him, and pretended to believe him, which of course prevented a quarrel, though his neglect might have been of the most serious consequence to me, and although the fact was that Mrs. Palmer had not been confined at all.

"About two months afterwards he was engaged to go to Reading to act for a benefit, but he did not go; and wrote to the poor actor, for whom he was to perform, that he could not leave town because Mrs. Palmer was just brought to bed. His letter was read from the stage to the audience. When I heard of it, I congratulated him upon the possession of a partner who increased his family every two months. But Plausible Jack, all his life, was blessed with inventive faculties.

"I remember there was a new comedy to be performed at Drury Lane, the name of which I do not now remember, in which Palmer had the principal part. It was very long, and the day before at rehearsal he did not know a single line of it. On the day the play was to be acted, the boxes all engaged, and a crowded house expected, Palmer sent word that he was taken dangerously ill, and that it would be at the risk of his life if he were to play that night. His letter was not sent to the theatre until three o'clock, when all was confusion from the lateness of the hour at which the intelligence was received. Mr. Sheridan was at the box-office, and I was with him when Powell, the prompter, brought the letter. When he had read it, he said to me, 'I'd lay my life this is a trick of Plausible Jack's, and that there is nothing the matter with him, except, indeed, not knowing a line of the part he has to act to-night. Let you and I call upon him, and I am sure we shall find him as well as ever.' He lodged in Lisle Street, two doors from my house. As we were passing by, Mrs. Crouch happened to be at one of the windows, and beckoned Mr. Sheridan to walk in; he did so, and I went on to Palmer's, and, finding the street-door open, walked upstairs, where I found him seated at table with his family in the middle of dinner, in seeming health and spirits. I told him to clear away the table, for Mr. Sheridan would be there in two minutes to see him ; ‘ and,’ said I, ‘ he swears there is nothing the matter with you, and that you have shammed sick only because you are not perfect. If he finds himself right in his surmises, he will never forgive you for putting off the play.’ ‘ Thanks my best, my dearest, valued friend,’ replied Palmer ; ‘ I’m sure you’ll not betray me.’ I assured him I would not, and in a moment he was in his bedroom, enveloped in his dressing-gown, with a large woollen nightcap on his head, and a handkerchief tied under his jaw, stretched on a sofa. As Mr. Sheridan entered the room, he began groaning as if in the most excruciating torture from toothache. Never did he act a part better on or off the stage. Mr. Sheridan was really taken in, advised him to have his tooth extracted, and then to study his part and get perfect in a new play. We went away, and I kept his secret till the day of his death.”

There is another good story of Palmer’s cool and careless impudence, when on one occasion he delivered a prologue without knowing a line of it. The prompter was placed underneath a toilet-table on the stage, and to Palmer, standing near, he gave line for line of the words, which Palmer repeated after him, with abounding smile and fiery gesture to make up for words he failed to hear. On yet another occasion, Palmer took the opportunity of an uproar in the front of the house to deliver an imaginary epilogue. He moved his lips, extended his arms, touched his heart —and said nothing. Suddenly there came a lull in the storm, and then the actor looked reproachfully at the audience, as if the noise had embarrassed him ; whereupon one half of the audience stormed at the other for interrupting the player ; and, under cover of the storm, Palmer seemed to conclude his epilogue, and made a grateful bow. Palmer was too careless to sustain the burden of life, and his end was dramatic. Kelly says :

“ Alas ! poor Palmer ! his fate was a lamentable one ; he had continually been involved in difficulties, brought on him by struggling to support and educate a numerous family ; and at the very moment that a hope of extrication from his difficulties gleamed upon him, he sank into the grave : for it is perhaps not generally known that two days previous to his going to Liverpool, at my house, and I may safely say through my influence, Mr. Sheridan appointed him stage-manager of Drury Lane Theatre, with a stipend of £400 per annum, exclusive of his salary as an actor; and commissioned me to be the bearer of the pleasing intelligence to him. The next morning, when I was singing a song at rehearsal, at the Haymarket, Palmer, who had been in the country, came on the stage to speak to one of the actors; when I espied him, without stopping the band, I went on singing the air, but for the right words of it I substituted the following:

My good Jack Palmer, don't go away,
I've got something pleasing to you to say.

This piece of sublime poetry produced a hearty laugh. I informed him of the appointment, with which, poor fellow, he was truly delighted; it was indeed the very summit of his hopes and wishes. That evening he set off for Liverpool, whence he never returned. It was supposed that the death of his youngest boy, on whom he doted, broke his heart."

His wife had also died, and Palmer was quite overcome. But he appeared at Liverpool in *The Stranger*, in the course of which he had to speak the words, "There is another and a better world." In the fourth act, he suddenly faltered, and fell dead on the stage, the date being August 2nd, 1798.[1] Forty years earlier another actor had died on the stage after speaking momentous words. This was Joseph Pethren, who was playing the Duke in *Measure for Measure*, and he fell dead as he finished the words: "Reason thus with life—If I do lose thee, I lose a thing that none but fools would keep: a breath thou art."

On April 16th, 1790, Kelly had the good fortune at his own benefit to produce for the first time the delightful musical play, *No Song, No Supper*, written by Prince Hoare (1755–1834), an artist who later became Foreign Secretary of the Royal Academy. As Kelly notes : " It will hardly be credited that this charming and popular opera, which has been acted hundreds of nights, was actually rejected by the Drury Lane management. Its author, my valued friend Prince Hoare, and Storace, the composer of its enchanting music, gave it me for my benefit ; the applause it received on that night induced the managers to solicit it from the author and composer." Thereafter for many years *No Song, No Supper* was one of the most popular pieces in the Drury Lane repertoire, and Stephen Storace's music was in the best style of that beautiful composer.[1] In later productions, Liston made a great success of the character of Endless, but the Editor of *Cumberland's British Theatre* would have no comparison with the original exponent of the part :

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[1] The profession was very generous in raising money for the benefit of Palmer's orphan children. At Drury Lane, Mrs. Siddons, Kemble, and Mrs. Jordan appeared, when, with gifts, £800 was obtained; at Liverpool, £400 (including £50 from Miss Farren, now Countess of Derby); and by Colman's company at the Opera House (lent for the occasion), £700. At the last-named theatre the dead man's son, R. Palmer, "was to have spoken an address, but he was so overcome by his feelings that he could neither speak the address nor perform his part in the farce. Indeed, August the eighteenth was too early for him to have been brought forward on such an occasion, as his father died but on the second of that month."

" Pleasant is the recollection of the joys that are passed ; . . . Suett's Endless rushes into our remembrance. *No Song, No Supper !* How gladly would we have given the supper for the song, had even Apicius been the caterer, and the Gods contributed their Nectar to crown the feast. And how sorry we were when the song was sung, the sack was emptied, and the piece was over. No actor ever touched Suett in this character. He spared neither rotundity of skirt, nor amplitude of wig ; and his frisk, shuffle, and ha, ha ! were never turned to more laughable account. Mathews comes nearest to him . . . the quaint grotesque style of *Cherub* Dicky. . . . Bannister has left no successor in Robin. . . . But what shall we say of Signora Storace, the playful Margaretta —with lowly suit and plaintive ditty, with her arch smiles and basket of ballads ? It were impossible to blame, and (to those who *remember her*) useless to praise . . . her enunciation was voluble and distinct, her science perfect, her voice rich, brilliant, and melodious ; and though, strictly speaking, grace was *not* in all her steps, yet such was her habitual gayety and good-humour, her brisk, dégagée, and dancing air, that she infused life and spirit into every scene."

Eheu ! Fugaces ! Here is the cast of the original production of *No Song, No Supper* :

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[1] Two of the songs, " Hope a Distant Joy Disclosing " and " Knocking at this Time of Day," had been composed by Storace for his early opera, *Equivoci*, produced in Vienna. See *ante*, pp. 103-104.

Frederick	*Mr. Kelly*
Robin	*Mr. J. Bannister*
Crop	*Mr. Dignum*[1]
Endless	*Mr. Suett*[2]
Margaretta	*Signora Storace*
Louisa	*Mrs. Crouch*
Dorothy	*Miss Romanzini*[3]

In April, 1790, Kelly played, for the first time, Macheath in *The Beggar's Opera* (which was originally produced in 1728), and he had the advantage of being coached in the part by actors who remembered some of the great early exponents of the character: "To play Macheath was the height of my ambition. I took all the pains I could, and no young man had greater pains taken with him. Mr. Linley remembered Beard and Vernon; John Kemble, Digges; they gave me imitations of these Macheaths. There was also then in London the celebrated Irish Macheath, and worthy man, old Wildar, who had retired from the theatrical profession. Previous to his going on the stage, he had been a painter, and had a secret for cleaning pictures, which produced him a good income. His Colonel Oldboy will never be forgotten, and his Macheath was excellent. From his tuition I learnt much; but my great support was the perfect recollection I had of Webster, who was certainly the best Macheath in the world.[4] I acted the part a number of nights, with by far the best acting Polly and the best Lucy I ever saw or ever hope to see again. Mrs. Crouch was Polly, and Miss De Camp (later Mrs. Charles Kemble) Lucy; both these ladies were inimitable."

Kelly also had the advice of John Beard (1716–91), who had been a famous exponent of Macheath in 1743, and a very celebrated tenor. He says, " Beard did me the honour to come from his house at Hampton to hear me sing ' Spirit of My Sainted Sire,' in *The Haunted Tower*. He sat in the Drury Lane orchestra box, with his trumpet to his ear, for he was very deaf; and after the opera was over, came upon the stage to me, and was pleased to express himself in high terms of approbation. I confess such a tribute from such a man was gratifying in the extreme."

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[1] Charles Dignum (1765–1827) had first appeared at Drury Lane in *Love in a Village*, 1784. His Crop in *No Song, No Supper* was great—the rosy host, "redolent of turtle and venison."

[2] Richard Suett (1755–1805) was originally a choir-boy at Westminster Abbey. He excelled in Shaksperean clowns. Much praised by Lamb in his essay *On Some of the Old Actors*.

[3] Maria Romanzini, the same actress mentioned on p. 167 in footnote. She was dark and small, though later stout, with a deep voice. Hence the gibe, when her son was born the following year: "Those who heard her masculine voice and the effeminate pipe of her husband, wonder much at the circumstance of a bouncing boy."

[4] See *ante*, p. 19.

It is of interest to recall that there was a burlesque of *The Beggar's Opera* produced by Colman the Elder at the Little Theatre in the Haymarket on August 8th, 1781, entitled *The Beggar's Opera Reversed*. All the highwaymen and other male parts were played by women, while the female characters were impersonated by men. Thus :

Macheath	*Mrs. Cargill*
Peachum	*Mrs. Le Fevre*
Lockit	*Mrs. Webb*
Filch	*Mrs. Wilson*
Lucy	*John Edwin*
Mrs. Trapes	*William Parsons*
Jenny Diver	*John Bannister*
Polly	*Charles Bannister*

The beautiful Mrs. Cargill made a romantic figure of Macheath, though one account says she looked " short and thick, but appeared quite at ease in the male attire." She acted with great spirit in the gayer scenes and songs, and at the tragic end with real feeling and art ; " her tremor, when the bell sounded for Macheath's execution, was a bit of natural tragedy which excited tears "—prophetic of her own sad impending fate, for she was drowned three years later when a passenger on a packet-boat for the East Indies, which was wrecked off the rocks of Scilly in 1784. " Mrs. Le Fevre, being but a slim woman, looked a little effeminate boy, more like the youthful clerk than like Peachum himself. Mrs. Webb, a gigantic, masculine woman, was a portly looking Lockit ; she sung the songs and spoke the dialogue in a very manly style ; played the part throughout with spirit, and actually took off all idea of the travestie. Mrs. Wilson, also, though a very pretty little woman, appeared to be in reality as complete a young pick-pocket as could be found among the boys who lurk about the doors of a theatre, and sung her songs as if she had always frequented such society. Gay himself could never have wished for a better Filch. The rest of the women were a strange looking gang of—not *highwaymen*, but little *pick-pockets*, and to see them armed to take the road was a laughable sight. Yet, however laughable the *female* gentlemen were, the *male* ladies were far more so. Edwin's droll looks and awkward management of his petticoats, his love, his anger, and his distress in Lucy, the odd effect which his appearance, voice, and manners gave his songs, was a combination of burlesque which can never be forgotten by those who witnessed it ; nor can it be conceived, even by those who knew Edwin in other characters, if they had *not* seen him in Lucy."

As for Charles Bannister (1738–1804), who had a tremendously deep bass voice—" powerful enough to crack a window-pane . . . so deep, so deep, he could go as low as a bull "—the absurdity of his impersonation of Polly can be realised when it is related that he warbled her tender, plaintive airs with the full timbre of his sonorous voice, that he vented a " Caliban roar " when pinched, and that his rough, manly face and tall, robust form were set off in the delicate white robes of a young girl, worn, of course, in the prevailing mode, over wide hoops :

" His first appearance excited a tumultuous roar of laughter, while his grave, modest looks, and fine, low curtseys . . . and his holding up his train rather too high when he went off the stage " were in a vein of burlesque extremely amusing to his audience. At the same time he sang the songs without offence, with pathos for the words in his finest style. In " Virgins are like the fair flower in its lustre " and " Oh, what a pain it is to part " he was deeply impressive and " made every word reach the heart." As Mrs. Trapes, Parsons found full scope for his broad drolleries, and the production as a whole was marked by a good deal of indecorum and suggestive byplay. Kelly heard all about this travesty from Signor Ferdinando Mazzanti, a celebrated soprano singer, described by Dr. Burney as a great musician and an eminent classical scholar. He came to England at the age of sixty to stay with Henry Swinburne (1743–1803), the traveller and author of *Travels through Spain* and *Travels in the Two Sicilies*, and great-grand-uncle of Algernon Swinburne, the poet. Arrived in London, Mazzanti sallied forth to hear an English opera, but he mistook the Little Theatre for the Opera House on the other side of the Haymarket, and so he witnessed *The Beggar's Opera Reversed.* He told Kelly that his astonishment and horror were unspeakable when he saw the part of a young girl acted by an old man, for he had not been informed, nor did he guess at the time, that the thing was a burlesque: on the contrary, he thought this rendering was the author's intention, and that the parts were always so inversely and perversely acted. So when, a few nights later, he was asked to go and see *Isabella* at Drury Lane, he said, "No, I will not go to your theatres to see heroines acted by old bass singers with beards." And for a long while after he could not be persuaded to visit any of the London play-houses by reason of this early disgust.

It was in 1790 that Kelly was one of the band of famous singers, including Madame Mara, Anna Storace, and Mrs. Crouch, recruited by Dr. Arnold to render in Whitchurch church, for the benefit of the poor of Stanmore, a selection of the works of Handel, who for three years had resided at the neighbouring Canons, the palace of the Duke of Chandos, the most magnificent of all English nobles. The church had been the chapel of the Duke; Handel was there as Master of Sacred Music, and here he composed his *Esther* and *Acis and Galatea.* The magnificent Canons of the Duke, where at dinner he had been served by a retinue whose "hundred footsteps scrape the marble hall," had been sold by his successor, when the place was pulled down and the materials also sold, in 1747. The house where Kelly and his friends stayed was a villa built on part of the site from some of the original materials by a Mr. Hallet. His grandson sold it to Captain Dennis O'Kelly (1720–87), a sportsman who owned the most famous of all racehorses, Eclipse. He bequeathed Canons to his nephew, Colonel O'Kelly, a friend of Michael Kelly, who relates that the owner's father resided with him at Canons—"a good-natured, well-meaning Irishman, with a fine Connaught brogue, and a great crony of

Father O'Leary's. When Mrs. Crouch and I were at breakfast, he called upon us, and said to me, ' Arrah, my jewel of a namesake, tell me what tunes we are going to hear at church this morning ? ' I showed him the printed bill, and he made his comments on it. In the first part was to be sung, ' Lord, what is man ? ' by Madame Mara. ' Upon my honour and conscience,' said he, ' I am mightily mistaken if Madame Mara don't pretty well know without asking.'[1] The next song announced was 'Total Eclipse,' by Mr. Kelly. 'That is right, my jewel,' said the Hibernian ; ' I like that now ; the more you talk about Eclipse the better, for wasn't it Eclipse[2] that bought Canons ? ' "

In August, 1790, Kelly, the Crouches, and a friend named M'Donnell, stayed at Margate. Mrs. Crouch's father, Mr. Phillips, now lived at St. Peter's, and, hearing from him of a poor girl at Margate who met with a severe accident and was destitute, the singers resolved to give a performance at the local theatre for the girl's benefit. Kelly and Mrs. Crouch appeared in *The*

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[1] Grantley Berkeley observed of Madame Mara that, though she " may have looked as well at seventy as Ninon de l'Enclos, I do not think she ruined any infatuated lover at that age." Madame Mara evidently believed that her charms and gifts were perennial, for she sang and acted Polly in *The Beggar's Opera* at the age of forty-eight, and was so ill-advised as to reappear as a vocalist in 1819, when she was seventy years of age—" a melancholy wreck of her once transcendental powers." Kelly says he tried to dissuade her from this public return to London : " It was truly grievous to see such transcendent talents as she once possessed so sunk, so fallen. I used every effort in my power to prevent her committing herself, but in vain. Among other arguments to draw her from her purpose, I told her what happened to Mombelli, one of the first tenors of his day, who lost all his well-earned reputation and fame by rashly performing the part of a lover, at the Pergola Theatre, Florence, in his seventieth year, having totally lost his voice. On the stage he was hissed ; and the following lines, lampooning his attempt, were chalked on his house door, as well as upon the walls of the city :

All' età di settanta
Non si AMA, nè si CANTA.
(i.e., *With the great age of seventy,*
Singing and loving don't agree.)

Would she had taken the sage counsel of the Spanish poet, Balthazar Gracia—' Learn to retire from public situations with dignity.' She was an excellent, kind-hearted woman ; but in this instance certainly not well advised." Madame Mara's return was probably the result of the ruin she sustained by the burning of Moscow, where she was living in 1812. Her final years were passed at Revel, where she died in 1833.

[2] The painting of the racehorse Eclipse by George Stubbs is the most famous and valuable sporting picture in the world. It was for many years in the collection of Sir Walter Gilbey at Elsenham, and when sold in 1915 only realised 700 guineas : but in 1929, when the picture again changed hands, the price was stated to run well into five figures, that is, over £10,000.

Beggar's Opera, when every seat in the house was taken. The subscription for the girl's benefit was much aided by visitors in the town, Wellesley-Pole (later Lord Maryborough, brother of the future Duke of Wellington), his wife, and her sister, the Honourable Mrs. Villiers. And when Jack Johnstone arrived in Margate, and heard from Kelly of the matter, he said, " If you think that my playing Mat-o'-the-Mint for the poor girl will be of any use or strength to the performance, you may command my services." The offer was, of course, accepted, for he held high rank in the profession, and so in the thieves' scene at the table of *The Beggar's Opera*, Johnstone introduced a song, " which he sang admirably, and was most loudly applauded—a just tribute to his talents and good-nature ; indeed, the whole of the performance gave satisfaction to as crowded an audience as ever filled a theatre. The receipts of the house, and many liberal presents sent to the poor girl, were by her patronesses invested in an annuity, which produced her at least a comfortable subsistence for the remainder of her life." The Profession has ever been generous at the call of distress.

Jack Johnstone determined to accompany Kelly, the Crouches, and M'Donnell to France, whither they were bound. So the party set forth in a post-carriage, with four horses for Dover, and here at the York Hotel they met a Captain Barnes, who had been second to Dick England in the notorious duel he fought at Cranford Bridge, near Hounslow, with Nolles, a brewer of Kingston, who was killed. Barnes was an Irishman, with a rich accent, a powerful man, and remarkably tall. He was one of the first to have a " shrimp " by way of man-servant—that is, a very small boy. This one was not nine years old, and very short for his age, dressed *cap-à-pie* like a horse-jockey. It was extremely amusing to see the huge master and the diminutive groom together. Crossing the beach to board the packet-boat, the Captain took long Bobadilian strides, and Tom minced along behind him. Every two minutes master would stop and cry out, " Tom, are you after me ? " And Tom would shrilly reply, " Yes, Captain." The Captain then vociferated to Kelly, " By the Pipe of Leinster, sir, he is the first man-servant in Europe." A few steps further, and then again, " Tom, are you after me ? " " Yes, sir." Then the Captain to Kelly, " Sir, he is the first rider and shaver on the face of the known universal world." The Captain thought his Goliath the best of all servants. And Kelly adds, " It was a truly laughable scene, and when I returned from France, and told Jack Bannister of it, it tickled his fancy so much, that many and many an evening, to please Lord Derby and Miss Farren, in the green-room, did we enact it—Bannister on his knees, representing Goliath, and myself his master; Bannister, with a great vein of comic humour, made the dialogue truly amusing, as, indeed, he did every imitation which he gave."

Arrived at Calais, they went on to Lisle and St. Omer, where the landlady of the hotel told them that " Madame le grande actrice Anglaise Siddons had just dined, and quitted the house not more than a quarter of an hour before their arrival." Asked what she thought of Mrs. Siddons, the landlady replied that she considered her a fine woman, who seemed to make it her study to appear a Frenchwoman, " but she has yet much to learn before she arrives at the dignity and grace of one ! "

So on to Douay, where one of Kelly's half-brothers, as well as his friends, John and Charles Kemble, had been educated. He says:

" My excellent friend, John Kemble, as is generally known, was intended for a priest, but Melpomene claimed him as her darling son, and snatched him from Holy Church, where, perhaps, he might have become as good a Cardinal in reality, and maybe a Pope, as he was on the stage. He was the best theatrical one I ever saw; his Cardinal Wolsey, in *Henry VIII*, was a masterpiece. Of one thing I am persuaded, from having lived for a number of years in habits of the strictest intimacy with him, that from his intellectual endowments, the extent of his mind, and the perseverance of his nature, that to whatever profession he had turned his thoughts he would have been a splendid ornament to it."

On the Thespians rolled in their swaying post-chariot, to Cambray, full of high spirits and jollity; and, provided with many bottles of sparkling champagne, they drank to the health of the inhabitants of every château they passed; Mrs. Crouch, it may be presumed, getting elegantly exhilarated if not inebriated, and Johnstone and Kelly singing all the time, and repeating, as they quaffed their golden liquor, Dr. Aldridge's translation of the Latin epigram of Causæ Bibendi:

If on my theme I rightly think,
There are five reasons why men should drink;
Good wine—a friend—or being dry,
Or lest one should be by and by,
Or—any other reason why.

They were light-hearted and gay, but France was not, and already the rumbles of the coming Revolution were audible. At Chantilly, they went to see the stables of the Prince de Condé, and the guide told them that he had been brought up in the Prince's stables from childhood, "but," said he, "thanks to our good citizens, Condé is no more a greater personage than myself. *Parbleu!* I am now his equal." And the shocked Kelly, ever *plus royaliste que le roi*, adds, "The triumphant air of satisfaction which the scoundrel displayed in his republican countenance, when reciting the downfall of his great, good, and unhappy master, actually filled us with horror; it seemed the *ne plus ultra* of baseness, villainy, and ingratitude." At Paris, when they attended the Grand Opera, and were in a conspicuous position in a box, the party of English actors noticed that the eyes of the whole theatre were directed at their box, with signs of marked displeasure and much whispering. Upon enquiry, it transpired that Mrs. Crouch was wearing in her hair a white rose, the emblem of the Royalists. She was, of course, quite unaware of the significance of her unconscious act. Fortunately she met with no open insult, which was singular, considering how completely the rising dominion of anarchy and tumult had brutalised the people. At this date, the autumn of 1790, Kelly and his friends heard at the Grand Opera in Paris Grétry's *La Caravane*, which was specially put on for their benefit by Monsieur Gardel, as Kelly and Mrs. Crouch were soon to appear in Linley's English version of the opera at Drury Lane. They also saw *Raoul Barbe Bleu*, with Chenard as Blue Beard, and Madame Dugazzon as Fatima. Jack Johnstone obtained a copy of Grétry's music, which was later used in a pantomime on the subject, by Delpini, at Covent Garden.

They also saw the great actor La Rive, in *Guillaume Tell*, and dined with him in his magnificent house in the Champ de Mars. His table was profuse, and his garden abounded with orange and lemon trees. La Rive recited to his guests a scene from Ducis's *Romeo and Juliet*, and Kelly says, "Never shall I forget his recitation ; it was the very essence of dramatic art. Johnstone, Mrs. Crouch, and myself had not words to express our admiration." In his library he had a print of Reynolds's portrait of Mrs. Siddons as the Tragic Muse, and he begged Kelly to tell her that if she would honour him with a visit, it would be a proud day for him to embrace so great a genius, and that he would go to Calais to meet her.

Kelly and his friends were in fine apartments in the Rue Neuve St. Marc, and engaged two *valets-de-place*, named Giuseppe and Louis. One evening, when they were dining out at the Palais Royal, they saw, opposite to the Café de Foix, a great crowd listening attentively to an orator who was haranguing them with the most revolutionary language, but in eloquent and polished periods. He proved to be the valet Louis, and when, later in the evening, he met Kelly, as ordered, with his master's great-coat, and was charged with his oratory at the Palais Royal, he replied, "Sir, you told me you did not want me until ten o'clock, and there I was to the minute ; in the interim, sir, I considered my time was my own, and I made what use of it I thought proper."

The following summer, June, 1791, witnessed the full tide of the Revolution. Kelly was again in Paris, and saw the tragic return of the Royal Family after the flight to Varennes. His narrative is of historic value :

"At day-break, one morning, I was awakened by the beating of drums, and an uproar in the street. I found the King and Queen had made their escape from Paris. The tumult was terrific ; all the gates of Paris were closed, the National Guards called out—in short, all was anarchy and confusion, and, although those dreadful scenes have been too accurately described to need an observation, it is impossible for one who has been an eye-witness to the horrors of a revolution to refer to the period without touching on the subject.

"One evening, I was sitting at the Café de Foix, in the Palais

Royal, with my two friends, Macarthy and Fagan, and at the same table was seated the notorious republican, Tom Paine,[1] and with him the well-known Governor Wall.[2] These two worthy persons were pouring forth to a group, that crowded round the table, the most horrid invectives against the King and Queen. My blood boiled to hear the miscreants vomit forth their infernal doctrines, and revolutionary principles. In the midst of their harangue a courier entered the coffee-room with intelligence, that the King, Queen, and family had been taken prisoners at Varennes. Never shall I forget the delight of that caitiff, Tom Paine ; his Bardolph face blazed with delight ; and Governor Wall loudly vociferated curses on their heads. I and my friends left the coffee-house with grief and horror, but were obliged to stifle our feelings. The sad news we found too true ; it was proclaimed in the Palais Royal, on the boulevards, and all over Paris ; and at night there was a general illumination.

"The next day Paris was all in a bustle ; couriers galloping backwards and forwards, dragged off their horses by the mob, and obliged to show their dispatches before they were allowed to proceed. In the evening, the King and Queen were expected to arrive at the Thuilleries, accompanied by their family and suite. I procured a place to see their entry, and, through the interest of a friend, mounted a tree quite close to the palace. The road through which they were to pass was crowded for miles.

"About six o'clock they entered the Thuilleries. I shall never forget it ; it was a heart-breaking sight to see them brought prisoners into their own palace. Their faithful followers and servants were seated on the top of their carriages, covered with dust, accompanied by an immense body of National Guards.

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[1] Thomas Paine (1737–1809) had published the first part of *The Rights of Man* the previous year—1790. His father was a small farmer and stay-maker of Thetford, but Thomas Paine, after serving some time at sea, went to America in 1774. He fled to France to avoid prosecution for his subversive doctrines, and was given the status of a French citizen in 1792. Later his life was in peril, and he was only saved by the fall of Robespierre. His *Age of Reason* appeared in 1793, and for this work and his other manifestations of disorder he was much ostracised when he returned to America in 1802.

[2] Joseph Wall (1737–1802), an Irishman, had been Governor of Goree, in Senegambia, 1779–82. Two years later he fled to France to escape prosecution for the murderous cruelties he had perpetrated during his governorship. In one case he had a soldier flogged to death by natives. After venturing to England, he was at last brought to trial, and executed in 1802.

The conduct of the populace I thought most praiseworthy ; not a voice was heard ; all was silence ; no exultation, no disapprobation ; in every countenance around me I saw nothing but depression and sorrow.

" I was quite close to the carriage when they dismounted ; nothing could be more majestic than the conduct of the Queen, when Dupont (member of the National Assembly) offered to hand her from the carriage ; she waved her hand, and walked with a firm step into the palace, without accepting his aid. She was plainly dressed, and, I remember, wore a black bonnet, covered with dust. What a reverse of fortune ! Not quite five years previously I had seen both the King and Queen dining in public at Versailles, in health, in happiness, and in greatness, the very idols of their subjects ; and now I beheld them brought back by force to their capital like malefactors.

" I wished to quit such scenes as soon as possible, and the next morning went to Mr. Merry, His Britannic Majesty's minister, to procure a passport, but was more than a week before I could obtain one. I met at Mr. Merry's, Johnstone's friend, Mr. England,[1] who was also waiting to get a passport to take him to Boulogne-sur-mer ; he kindly offered me a seat in his carriage, which I thankfully accepted : we both got passports, and at nine o'clock at night left Paris. I had the precaution to put a national cockade in my hat ; while my companion, who, by the way, had been taking so many parting bottles with his friends that he was greatly intoxicated, fell fast asleep.

" When we got to the post-house, at Ecouen, to change horses, a crowd of men and women surrounded our carriage, armed with pikes, pitch-forks, etc., and demanded our passports. A monster of a woman, with a pike clenched in her extensive hand, opened the carriage-door, woke England out of his sleep, and gave him a hearty shake ; he could not speak any French, except, unluckily, a few abusive words, which he did not fail to bestow upon all around him. I jumped out of the carriage, and addressed the huge Sycorax, who appeared to be the spokeswoman of the infuriated party. I told her that my companion and myself were English republicans, showed her the national cockade which I wore in my hat, and added, that the gentleman in the carriage

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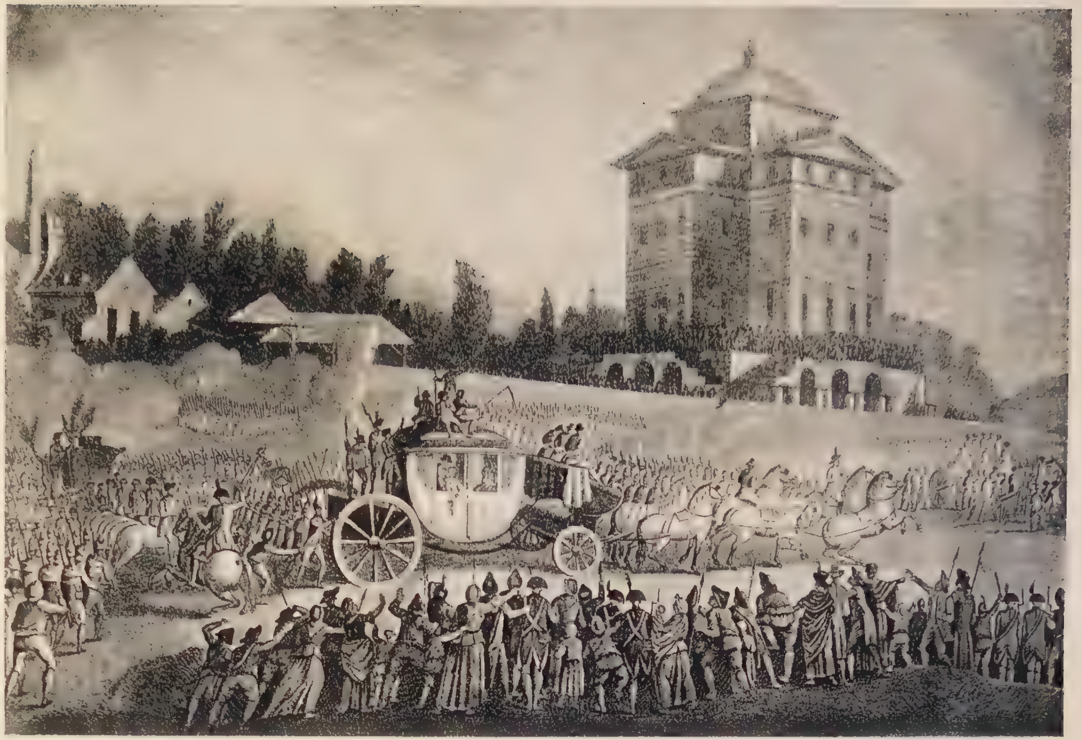
[1] Dick England, who fought the fatal duel (see *ante*, p. 181).



THE RETURN OF LOUIS XVI AND MARIE ANTOINETTE FROM VARENNES, 25TH JUNE, 1791

was, unfortunately, very much intoxicated with drinking republican toasts before he left Paris. I showed her our passports, and, in short, soothed and flattered the huge harridan so much, that she let us proceed without further molestation.[1] Our lives would not have been worth a sous, had I not spoken French, and taken the method which I did; notwithstanding which, I felt very uneasy until I reached Boulogne, for Mr. England was rather of a choleric temper, and could not disguise his dislike to the French.

"When I got to Boulogne, I remained with him at his house there for two days, which were all I could spare, as the time was approaching at which I was obliged to be at Oxford, where Mrs. Crouch and I were engaged to sing at the grand musical festival. After this short delay, therefore, I took my leave of Dick England, grateful for the many attentions he paid me."

Kelly had seen a good deal of Dick England in Paris, where his friend had been keeping a faro bank with the notorious Lady Worsley. She was Seymour Dorothy, daughter of Sir John Fleming, Bart., of Brompton Park (where now stands the Victoria and Albert Museum), and married Sir Richard Worsley, Bart., of Appuldercombe, Isle of Wight. He brought his suit for divorce seven years later, in 1782, when Lady Worsley admitted that she had bestowed her favours on thirty-four young men. Horace Walpole adds the caustic comment that "a better defence for her was the connivance of her husband, who was proved to have carried one of the troop on his back to the housetop, to view his fair spouse stark naked in the bath. The jury was so equitable as to give the plaintiff but one shilling damages."

At one of Dick England's sumptuous dinners in Paris, Kelly met another notorious person, Dr. William Jackson (1737–95), the Irish revolutionary, who when concerned with the affairs of the Duchess of Kingston was satirised by Samuel Foote as "Dr. Viper." Jackson then got up the capital charge against Foote on the allegations of his coachman, which well-nigh brought Foote to ruin. Jackson was eventually tried for treason in Dublin, in 1794–5, and died in the dock from poison, probably supplied by his wife. Kelly says that he found Jackson " a well-informed, pleasant man, full of anecdote, particularly about theatrical people. He was considered a great republican, and a great rebel. I confess I thought him, from his conversation, a dangerous man, and was fully on my guard before him."

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[1] Possibly Dickens based some of the detail in the chapter entitled "In Secret" (chapter i., Book III) of *A Tale of Two Cities* on this account by Kelly, whose "Sycorax" was of the same kidney as "The Vengeance."

The Revolution rushed to its final cataract of terror. Louis XVI and Marie Antoinette were murdered in 1793. Napoleon rose rapidly to power. England and France were at war, and then in 1802 came the brief Peace of Amiens—just an interlude for the Dogs of War to recover their breath—and everyone who could flocked to Paris, filled with curiosity to see the new régime which had succeeded the rule of the Bourbons. Kelly was, of course, among the number, and he gives some intensely interesting glimpses of Napoleon as First Consul :

" In the month of July, 1802, Viganoni and I set off in a post-chaise for Dover, and got on board a packet for Calais ; we were four and thirty hours at sea ; among the passengers were Lady Carhampton and Mr. Lewis Goldsmith, whom I had the pleasure of knowing. We got to Nampont at night, where I sat upon the very bench which Sterne mentions in his *Sentimental Journey* ; and, all the time, I could think of nothing but the ' poor old man and his dead ass.' When we got to Paris, we went to an excellent hotel in the Rue Neuve St. Marc. On going past the Thuilleries, on our way to dinner, over the gate, in the Place Carousel, the first objects which caught my eye and grieved my heart were my old friends the horses, which I used to admire in the Piazza San Marc at Venice. Then they were of bronze, the pride of the Venetians, and to have had them gilt seemed to me like sacrilege.

" There were [at this period we were at peace with France] a vast number of English in Paris, amongst whom I had the pleasure to be known and noticed by Lord Erskine, Mrs. Damer, Mr. and Mrs. Fox, Lord and Lady Holland, whose condescension I always experienced whenever I had the honour of meeting them. There were also in Paris my very kind friend the Earl of Guilford, the Honourable Mrs. and Miss St. Leger with Doctor Mousley, on their way to Barèges to drink the waters. Viganoni took me with him to a friend of his in the Place Carousel, to see the First Consul, Buonaparte, review the troops. It was a magnificent sight. He was mounted on his charger in a plain blue coat, white pantaloons, and a plain cocked hat; and close to him, mounted on a fine Arabian horse, his favourite Mameluke, who seemed an admirable horseman. All the general officers on the ground wore rich and splendid uniforms. The contrast was great between their gorgeous attirements and the simple costume of the little great man, who seemed perfectly conscious of his adventitious superiority."

It is of interest to compare this account with the following passage from *Farington's Diary*, September 2nd, 1802, when he witnessed the same or a similar review of troops by Napoleon :

" I went to Place de Carousel opposite the Thullières to see the monthly grand review. About eleven, troops began to appear, and before twelve there were about 6,000 Cavalry and Infantry drawn up in 6 or 7 lines. They made a very handsome appearance. The dress of the officers very rich. There were also artillery with field pieces drawn by Horses. At 10 minutes after 12 Buonaparte came out of the great entrance to the Thullières, and mounting his favourite White Horse, which has a stately, prancing gait, and followed by his Generals, advanced and proceeded in the front of each line of troops to review them. He pulled off his Hat as He passed the colours of each Corps. After seeing the effect of this generally, and wishing to look more closely at the countenance of Buonaparte, I went among the people and was lucky enough to get to the front, between the Cavalry, at an angle which afforded me a view of him as He advanced toward the place where I stood and where He turned to move along the line. I thought his general appearance better than I expected, and his countenance of a higher style than any picture or bust of him that I have seen. He has an intent and searching look, but his expression is confident. His complexion is not as I have heard it described waxy, but though wanting of colour sufficiently healthy. His person is slim, and I should judge him to be about 5 feet 6 inches high. He was dressed in Blue, much more plain than His officers, which gave him additional consequence, for the power and splendour of his situation was marked by the contrast, as commanding all that brilliant display. After having passed before each line He returned and placed himself before the Grand entrance out of which he came. At this period several men and women advanced forward and presented Petitions to him, which were given to an Officer in waiting. The troops then in succession moved forward and marched Column after Column before him. When the last had passed He dismounted and re-entered the Thullières at one o'clock."

Kelly's narrative continues:

"On my return from the review, I met my worthy friends, John Kemble and Mr. Robert Heathcote, in the Rue Richelieu; we agreed to dine together, and go in the evening to the Théâtre Français to see Talma act Orestes in *The Distressed Mother*. I was pleased with the performance of that great actor; but there was a scene performed in the front of the house more curious to an Englishman. Charles Fox, accompanied by his lady, and some male friends, occupied a box in the first tier. After the first act of the play there was a buzz through the parterre that Charles Fox was in the house; the moment it was known, there was a general call from the parterre for him to come forward and show himself. The cry from all parts of the house was, 'Monsieur Fox! Monsieur Fox! come forward, we want to see you.' For several minutes he was deaf to the call, but the audience seemed determined not to let the performance go on until he did, for Mr. Fox was as naturally a favourite with the revolutionary French as Mr. Pitt was the contrary. At length his friends pushed him forward. The moment he appeared there was very general applause, which continued for some time, he bowing most respectfully to the audience. Just as the applause ceased, Buonoparte, accompanied by some of his officers, entered his box which was *vis-à-vis* to the one Fox occupied. On his *entré* he was received with the clapping of a few hands. He seemed somewhat dissatisfied with his reception; at all events, he did not remain above a quarter of an hour in the box, and left it without taking the slightest notice of the audience.

"The next day the first Consul held a grand levee at the Thuilleries, and all the English were presented to him, myself excepted; but though I was not there *in propriâ personâ* my opera hat was, for my Lord Guilford, not having his own with him, borrowed mine, which many a time and oft I had worn on the stage when acting Captain Macheath. On the day of the levee I dined with Lord Guilford, who gave me an account of his reception.

" He was introduced by the Prefect du Palais as Lord Guilford,[1] son of Lord North, at one time Prime Minister of His Britannic Majesty. Buonaparte, darting one of his spiteful looks at him, said, ' My lord, your father, was a very great man,' and turning to the Marshal said, sneeringly, ' Was it not he who lost America for England ? Yes, he was a very great man indeed ' ; then turning upon his heel he walked on. The vulgar rudeness and uncalled-for impertinence of the remark was received by the noble Earl with contemptuous silence.

" I saw Buonaparte one evening at the Italian Opera, the performance was Paisiello's *Nina*, in which Rovedino and Viganoni both sang, particularly a duet, with which Buonaparte seemed much pleased. Josephine was in the box, and appeared a charming woman. He was very attentive to her throughout the performance, although he afterwards divorced her for his personal convenience. He was very partial to Paisiello's music, and sent to Naples for him, gave him an appointment of two thousand louis a year, excellent apartments in the Thuilleries, and a carriage, with servants who had permission to wear the Buonaparte livery. Acts like these pass for liberality and magnanimity in a Corsican tyrant. What would the English nation say if an English monarch ventured to do such a thing ? "

Kelly went to see Paisiello in Paris, in memory of the time when he had sung in his opera of *Il Re Teodoro* at Vienna in 1786. When he came to the drawing-room door of Paisiello's apartments, Kelly paused outside, and sang the favourite song which Paisiello had composed for him in the rôle of Old Gafferio ; and, although sixteen years had elapsed since that time, the composer immediately recognised the tones of Michael's voice. Opening the door, he embraced him, and said, " Ben venuto, mio caro O'Kelly." Kelly dined and spent the day with Paisiello and Signora Luigia, his wife, with much talk of the old times.

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[1] Francis, fourth Earl of Guilford (1761–1817), who had succeeded his brother on April 20th of this year, 1802.

CHAPTER V

The Stage at the Close of the Eighteenth Century

It is now necessary to return to the year 1791, when, on January 21st, was produced at Drury Lane the opera of *The Siege of Belgrade*, written by James Cobb, with music by Stephen Storace.[1] Mrs. Crouch, as Catharine, won great praise for the "Letter Duet" with Kelly, the Seraskier; and Palmer was as quaint as ever. One evening an unfortunate accident occurred in the battle scene, when he and Kelly were fighting with scimitars. He left his head unguarded, and received so severe a blow on the forehead that the blood spurted all over the stage. Mrs. Crouch rushed forward, and rendered first aid, but luckily the wound was superficial, though Palmer had to wear a black patch on his forehead for a long time; he bore his misfortune with his customary good humour.[2] On the 4th of June of this year the old Drury Lane of Wren closed for ever with performances of *The Country Girl* and *No Song, No Supper*, and the final words of thanks were spoken by Palmer.

Kelly quotes an amusing pasquin on the end of the second Drury Lane Theatre from a newspaper dated June 6th, 1791: "Died, on Saturday night, of a gradual decay, in the hundredth and seventeenth year of her age, old Madam Drury, who lived in eight reigns, and saw many generations pass in review before her. She remembered Betterton in age, lived in intimacy with Wilks, Booth, and Cibber, and knew old Macklin when he was a stripling; her hospitality exceeded that of the English character, even its earliest days of festivity, having almost through the whole of her life entertained from one to two thousand persons of both sexes six nights out of seven in the week; she was an excellent poetess, could be grave and gay by turns, and yet sometimes catching disorder from intrusive guests, could be dull enough in all conscience; her memory was excellent, and her singing kept in such a gradual state of improvement that, it was allowed, her voice was better the three or four last years of her life than when she was in her prime. At the latter end of the century she had a rout of near two thousand people at her house the very night of her death ; and the old lady felt herself in such spirits that she said she would give them *no supper without a song*, which being complied with, she fell back gently in her chair, and expired without a groan. Dr. Palmer, one of her family physicians, attended her in her last moments, and announced her dissolution to the company."

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[1] He introduced a good deal of Vincenzo Martini's music from the opera of *La Cosa Rara*.

[2] Palmer was unlucky, for on another occasion he was badly stabbed by Mrs. Barry with a real dagger when he was playing the part of Dionysius in *The Grecian Daughter*.

In the summer, Kelly and Mrs. Crouch carried out musical engagements with other artistes at York and Newcastle-on-Tyne, where they again were associated with the eccentric manager, Tate Wilkinson, who found in Kelly a congenial spirit of the culinary art :

" I cannot conscientiously say that my worthy Tate had any opinion whatever of my musical abilities,[1] but he took it into his head that my skill in the culinary art was great ; he used to call me the Harmonious Apicius ; indeed, we hardly ever discussed any subjects but those of cooking and eating ; he had a small appetite, but was a great epicure. At one time, when I was making an agreement with him, I wanted twenty guineas more than he was willing to give ; at length he said, ' Well, young Apicius, twenty guineas shall not part us ; you shall have it your own way ; but confess now honestly, didn't you think the ducks were over-roasted yesterday at my Lord Mayor's ? '

" Wilkinson was certainly one of the most eccentric men I ever met with ; one of his whims was to hide chocolate drops and other sweetmeats in different holes and corners of his house, his great pleasure consisting in finding them, as if by accident, some days after. When he had taken a few glasses of old Madeira, of which he was very fond, he would mix his conversation about theatricals and eatables together in a manner at once ludicrous and incomprehensible. I was sitting with him one night, in high spirits, after supper, and we spoke of Barry the actor. ' Sir,' said he, ' Barry, Sir, was as much superior to Garrick in Romeo as York

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[1] Tate Wilkinson speaks very highly of Kelly's abilities in his amusing book, *The Wandering Patentee* (1795), where he also styles him " the Fascinating Kelly."

Minster is to a Methodist chapel, not but I think that if lobster sauce is not well made, a turbot isn't eatable, let it be ever so firm. Then there's that Miss Reynolds; why she, Sir, fancies herself a singer, but she is quite a squalini, Sir! a nuisance, Sir! going about my house the whole of the day roaring out, "The Soldier tired of War's alarms," ah! she has tried me and alarmed the whole neighbourhood; not but when rabbits are young and tender, they are very nice eating. There was Mrs. Barry, for example; Mrs. Barry was very fine and very majestic in *Zenobia*; Barry, in the same play, was very good, not but that the wild rabbits are better than tame ones. Though Mrs. Barry was so great in her day, yet Mrs. Siddons—stewed and smothered with onions, either of them are delicious. Mrs. Pope was admirable in Queen Elizabeth; a man I had here made a very good Oronooko; not but I would always advise you to have a calf's head dressed with the skin on, but you must always bespeak it of the butcher yourself; though the last bespeak of Lord Scarborough did nothing for me, nothing at all, the house was one of the worst of the whole season; with bacon and greens,—not twenty pounds altogether—with parsley and butter'; and on he went talking until he talked himself asleep; for which I did offer my thanks to Somnus with all my soul; yet when clear of these unaccountable reveries he was an amusing companion.

"I have heard my friend King assert that such was the power of Wilkinson's mimicry that, ugly as he was, he could make his face resemble that of Mrs. Woffington, who was a beauty of her time. I once requested him to make Mrs. Woffington's face for me, which he good-naturedly did, and, to my utter astonishment, really made a handsome one. He was very fond of talking of his Peg, as he called Mrs. Woffington, and avowed that, in his younger days, he was passionately in love with her.

"Tate Wilkinson was not singular in mixing with whatever subject he was talking about, that of eating. I knew a countryman of mine, a captain in the Irish brigade, whose constant habit was always to bring in something or other about eatables. A gentleman praising the Bay of Dublin and its similitude to the Bay of Naples, 'Dublin Bay, Sir,' said my countryman, 'is far and away finer than the Bay of Naples; for what on earth can be superior to a Dublin Bay herring?' 'I am told,' said the gentleman, 'that the Irish brigade in the Empress Maria Theresa's service are a fine set of men.' 'You may say that, Sir,' said my friend, 'and she has also in her dominions the finest beef and mutton I ever tasted anywhere.' One winter there was a severe frost in Dublin, and such a scarcity of coals that hardly any were to be got for love or money; a gentleman was lamenting the situation of the poorer orders from the severity of the weather. 'It's very true, they are much to be pitied, poor devils,' said the captain, 'and the cold is very shocking, but it will bring in the curlews.'"

Tate Wilkinson had at this date some considerable trouble with Mrs. Jordan, and Kelly was present at the time when she declined to appear further at the York Theatre, owing to her poor reception and the only half-filled house. She took stronger methods of expressing her opinions of the Yorkists than did Kemble and Kelly on the occasions, already mentioned, of their unpleasant experiences in Yorkshire. Tate Wilkinson relates in his *Wandering Patentee* that when Mrs. Jordan went on as Hypolita, she was greeted "with great good humour, but not violently or in raptures: but instead of making even a slight bow, she turned right round up the stage (though not in character), as much as to say, 'kiss my a——.'" She next cancelled her contract, when her engagement was only half completed, and wrote that she would gladly pay the forfeit of £30 rather than act again to such a set of milk-and-water people. She was now in a position to take the high hand, in marked contrast to her condition nine years earlier, when she had arrived in York, in 1782, in a distressed and almost destitute condition, to seek an engagement from Tate Wilkinson, and that but four months before the birth of the first of her sixteen illegitimate children.

The career of Mrs. Jordan offers one of the most remarkable examples of the vagaries, the ups and downs, the silks and tatters, the diamonds and tinsel, of the player's life. Unlike the majority of her stage contemporaries, Dorothy Bland (1761–1816) was well born. Her father, Francis Bland, was an officer turned actor, a son of Judge Nathaniel Bland, of Derryquin Castle, Co. Kerry; while her mother, though a strolling actress, was the daughter of the Rev. Dr. Philipps, of Carmarthenshire. Dorothy was an illegitimate child, and probably born in London, for she was christened at the church of St. Martin's-in-the-Fields in December, 1761.[1] Her childhood was a time of privation and migration. She made her first appearance on the stage, in Dublin, when eighteen years old, and two years later she fell a victim to the notorious Richard Daly, the actor-manager who made a business of preying upon the young actresses who played at his theatre; he was the father of her first child. After much hard work in York and the north of England, having changed her acting name from Bland and "Miss Francis" to Mrs. Jordan—for *pregnant* reasons, as some unkind wit suggested, or because, as she said, she had shed enough tears to overflow the River Jordan, and it was time she crossed it—the young actress found her chance when she was engaged to appear at Drury Lane, in October, 1785, as Peggy in *The Country Girl* (the emasculated version of Wycherley's sparkling comedy of *The Country Wife*). The rich, silvery tones of that memorable voice and that rare laugh, that abounding sense of humour which marked one of the greatest comediennes of the English stage, conquered at once. Sir Joshua Reynolds preferred Mrs. Jordan to all other actresses he had seen, because she "ran upon the stage as a playground, and laughed from sincere wildness of delight." And Macready said, "With a spirit of fun that would have out-laughed Puck himself . . . her voice was one of the most melodious I ever heard, which she could vary by certain bass tones that would have disturbed the gravity of a hermit; and who that once heard that laugh of hers could ever forget it? The words of Milman would have applied well to her—'Oh, the words laughed on her lips.' Mrs. Jordan's laugh was so rich, so apparently irresistible, so deliciously self-enjoying, as to be at all times irresistible." Charles Lamb, too, says of Mrs. Jordan's voice that in her early days "it sank, with her steady, melting eye, into the heart," while lyrical Hazlitt said it was "a cordial to the heart, because it came from it full, like the luscious juice of the rich grape. To hear her laugh was to drink nectar. Her smile was sunshine; her talking far above singing; her singing was like the twanging of Cupid's bow. Her body was large, soft, and generous like the

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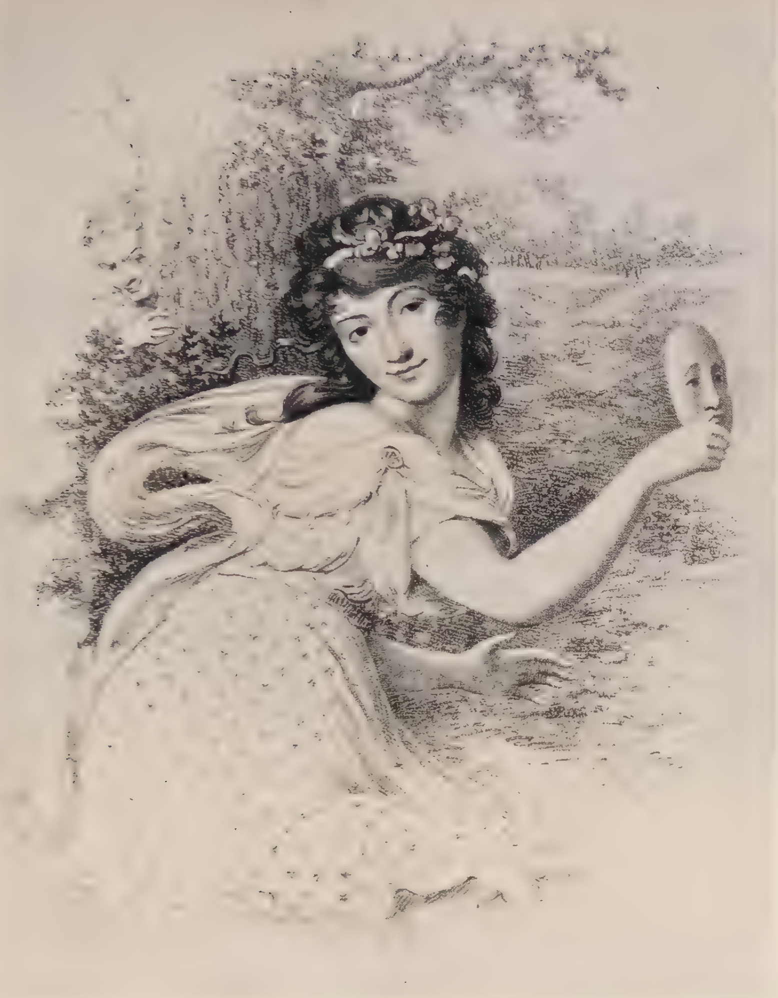
[1] This date and place of Mrs. Jordan's birth were discovered by Mrs. Clare Jerrold for her book, *The Story of Dorothy Jordan*, a work based on careful research (though it contains a grave error concerning Mrs. Crouch). Hitherto it was believed that Mrs. Jordan was born in 1762, at or near Waterford.



MRS. JORDAN

As Euphrosyne in *Comus*

rose. . . . Jordan was all exuberance and grace. It was her capacity for enjoyment, and the contrast she presented to everything sharp, angular, and peevish, that delighted the spectator. She was Cleopatra turned into an oyster wench." A new force had dawned in the theatre—Mrs. Jordan, " The Child of Nature," henceforth to be identified with romps and hoydens and gallant youths in small clothes. Thalia was now the rival of Melpomene—Mrs. Siddons—who was reduced to the most humiliating expedients to preserve her sovereignty, even undergoing the horror of wearing boy's apparel as Rosalind in order to show that she, too, could act comedy as well as the immoral young woman who now sought to wrest the sceptre of supremity from the stately Siddons's grasp. With Miss Farren and Mrs. Crouch the newcomer was also in acute competition, and on more legitimate grounds. The two ladies who had been supreme in comedy at Drury Lane combined against their challenger from the provinces. Miss Farren gave up the contest when she retired gracefully from the stage, in 1797, to marry the Earl of Derby, and carried her " fine-lady airs and graces " to the more appropriate setting of the Peerage. But Mrs. Crouch and Mrs. Jordan continued their battle to the bitter end, and vilified each other in spoken word and by the pens of their respective supporters in the Press. Mrs. Jordan could never forgive incidents which attended a revival of *Richard Cœur de Lion* in 1791—that same musical drama which Kelly witnessed on the first day he was in London, in 1787, and heard Kemble singing so indifferently, saw for the first time with admiration the " wonderful beauty " of Mrs. Crouch, and the delightful acting of Mrs. Jordan. The latter had the principal part of Matilda, which in the English version had swallowed up the character and songs of Blondel—one of the early examples of the absurd and unpleasant convention of a female " playing Boy," an inartistic casting that still survives in pantomime, in the part of the page Siebel in the opera of *Faust*, and in the choruses of musical comedies and revues. Mrs. Crouch had the part of the sprightly Laurette. In November, 1791, when *Richard Cœur de Lion* was due, and the audience assembled, it was announced that, owing to the sudden and alarming illness of Mrs. Jordan, the play would be changed to *High Life Below Stairs*. The fickle public was immediately incensed against the new idol, and, perhaps instigated by the supporters of Mrs. Crouch, the audience groaned, stamped the feet of discontent, and bawled, " Return our money ! " " Why didn't you put a notice on the doors ? " " Mrs. Crouch ! we will only have Mrs. Crouch ! With her there is no need to want Mrs. Jordan."

The next day Mrs. Crouch's Press took up the cry—" papers over which this Bacchante possessed great influence railed at Mrs. Jordan with the most unmerciful abuse ; truth and falsehood were brought forward with the same readiness to stigmatise her." The campaign was successful, and, on November 26th, Mrs. Crouch, who was quite prepared for the emergency, appeared in the part of Matilda. She was received with seven or eight distinct, general, and long plaudits. And the Crouch newspapers announced : " They are the decrees of the public that Mrs. Jordan shall have that part no more, whether it is held by Mrs. Crouch or any other person. One good we may venture to predict from the conduct of the audience, that there will be fewer *illnesses* this season at either theatre than can be remembered at any other." . . . " Amidst the clamour on Saturday night, ' No Jordan ' was distinct. An English audience, merely because a performer in a very narrow cast of parts has been successful, are not to be insulted. Mrs. Jordan may rest assured, notwithstanding *Nature* has well formed her for certain characters—for her art in acting is very trifling—she can be better spared from the stage than many who give themselves less consequence."

Piquancy was given to the conflict between the ladies owing to the fact that it was just at this date that Mrs. Crouch was alleged to have been raised to the bed of the Prince of Wales, while there was not the slightest doubt but that Mrs. Jordan had become the mistress of his brother, the Duke of Clarence. A print was published showing Mrs. Crouch and Mrs. Jordan displaying the beauty of their silk-hosed legs for the approval and verdicts of the Prince of Wales and the Duke of Clarence. The cryptic allusions to " illnesses " and " Nature " in the extracts from the newspapers quoted above concerned Mrs. Jordan's ever-recurrent maternity. In the course of twenty-five years she gave birth to at least sixteen bastard children ; fourteen survived and two were still-born, while, in addition, she had several miscarriages. During all this period, she was constantly on the stage, and it frequently happened that she acted up to a short time before her confinement, with the result that an excuse of "sudden illness" was necessary to cover her temporary retirement from the boards. There can be little doubt but that Mrs. Jordan's flagrant immorality and her continuous exhibition on the stage of her person in "an interesting condition" had much to do with the violent Puritan reaction against the theatre and its performers which was a marked characteristic of the next generation as it matured in the early Victorian period, particularly among the middle classes, who took the virtuous domestic life of Queen Victoria as their exemplar. I have known good Christian women, in other respects the most charitable of beings, reiterate in all sincerity their belief that no actress could be other than an immoral woman, and that every theatre, in its life behind the scenes, was a sink of iniquity. One can only surmise that such views were the survival of recollections of childhood, when they heard their parents discuss the flagitious lives of Mrs. Jordan and many of her contemporaries on the stage.

Soon after her arrival at Drury Lane in 1785, Mrs. Jordan became the mistress of a briefless barrister, Richard Ford,[1] whose father, however, was a wealthy physician of Albemarle Street and, further, a capitalist who held a mortgage of £31,500 on Drury Lane Theatre. Mrs. Jordan always hoped that Ford would redeem his promise to make her his wife,[2] but though for a time she was called Mrs. Ford, the all-important ceremony was never performed, while in the meanwhile two, at least, daughters were born of the connection. In 1791 Mrs. Jordan attracted the attention of the Duke of Clarence (later King William IV), then a young man of twenty-six, and she passed to him under the agreement, it is believed, of a bond to pay her £1,000 a year, though it is doubtful if she ever received any regular cash from her semi-insane " protector " : on the contrary, there is every reason to believe that he spent all the money he could seize from her earnings, and was in the habit of collecting her salary in advance from the pay-office of the theatre, for, as Peter Pindar, Junior, expressed it :

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[1] Ford and Mrs. Jordan lived at No. 5, Gower Street.

[2] After separating finally from Mrs. Jordan, Richard Ford married Miss Booth, daughter of Benjamin Booth, the friend of Reynolds and a noted art collector, and their eldest son, Richard Ford (1796–1858) was the author of *A Handbook for Travellers in Spain*, 1845. His son, in turn, was Sir Clare Ford (1828–99), British Ambassador at Madrid and Rome, whose son, Captain Richard Ford, sold at Christie's in 1929 the collection of pictures by Richard Wilson which had descended to him from his great-great-grandfather, Benjamin Booth, mentioned above. Seventeen of Wilson's landscapes realised over £20,000.

As Jordan's high and mighty squire
Her play-house profit deigns to skim,
Some folks audaciously inquire
If he keeps her or she keeps him.

Then began that extraordinary life at Bushy House which seems like an episode from the times of Charles II, when kings copulated with ladies of the stage and raised up a numerous royal bastardy.[1] In the space of fifteen years, Mrs. Jordan presented her Royal Duke with ten children, and in the intervals he saw to it that she earned her living on the stage, arranging her engagements and receiving her salary. Certainly no woman ever worked harder than Mrs. Jordan, and extreme Feminists, who declaim against the burden of child-bearing and the wrongs of women, might well evolve a text-book from her hard case.[2] Of course, the contemporary caricaturists made full play with the amazing situation, and prints of vast indecency were seen on all sides. One that was only amusing showed the Duke as a coarse farmer, dragging wearily along a perambulator containing three hideous children, while the mother walks behind, assiduously conning a theatrical part. The FitzClarence children were, in actuality, fine specimens, strong, active, and with flaxen hair. As the King and the virtuous Queen Charlotte did not at this date frown on their son's irregular alliance, most of the English people seemed rather flattered that a Royal Duke was raising up a sturdy progeny from native middle-class stock, and writers with an eye to Royal patronage were willing to let themselves go in most sentimental style when reviewing the immoralities of Bushy House. Thus, in a descriptive poem, entitled *Richmond Hill*, published in 1807, the author was able to take a very roseate view of both the Duke of Clarence's naval prowess and his illegitimate domestic bliss :

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[1] *The Morning Post* of January 3rd, 1794, announced some three weeks before the birth of the Duke of Clarence's eldest son George (later the first Earl of Munster) on January 29th : " The splendid preparations for Mrs. Jordan's accouchement are still continued. The cradle is lined with regal scarlet, and every article is marked with the Royal Insignia."

[2] Mrs. Jordan was in her forty-sixth year when her last child was born.

From bowery Richmond's pomp of deep'ning shade,
For ever with increased delight surveyed,
Bear me, soft gales ! to Bushy's lofty grove,
Where Genius, Love, and raptured Clarence rove ;
CLARENCE, his scepter'd Sire's, his Country's pride !
Her boast on land, her bulwark on the tide.
When Nelson's spirit to the realms of light
On seraph pinions bent its rapid flight,
Though heap'd around him lay the vanquish'd foe,
To her deep centre Britain felt the blow—
From her bright eye the sparkling radiance fled,
O'er her wan cheek a deadly paleness spread,
She pined in secret, 'mid triumphal palms,
And Victory itself lost half its charms—
But when, at length, her tear-fraught eye she raised,
And on the dauntless band delighted gazed,
That yet remained on her loved isle to sweep,
With Nelson's skill and fire, the subject deep,
But chief her CLARENCE—who with ardour fired,
Like that which Cressy's victor chief inspired,
With fearless Rodney, while a stripling, bore
Her thunder to Columbia's distant shore . . .
Launch'd its dread bolt upon th'Iberian main,
And tore the laurel from insulting Spain :
The radiant lustre to her eye return'd,
Her cheek with renovated crimson burn'd ;
Eager she grasped th' unconquerable blade,
And all the terrors of her shield displayed.
" *And still at Mine and Glory's call,*" *she cries,*
From Love's soft toils shall valiant Clarence rise ;
To distant realms my blazing standard bear,
The polar frost, the Lybian fervours dare—
Wake all my thunders, all my vengeance wield,
A second Rodney on the watery field.
While in his lovely progeny I trace
The dauntless rivals of great Edward's race."

However, the valiant Clarence never rose again from " Love's soft toils " at " Glory's call " : what did cause him to rise was the increasing age and size of Mrs. Jordan, and later his need of money, which could only be obtained by a marriage of convenience. As early as 1796 there were rumours that the Duke was philandering elsewhere. Lord Glenbervie notes in his diary on January 26th : " There have been many reports of late at Richmond that the Duke of Clarence and Mrs. Jordan were about to separate on account of a supposed attachment to Mrs. Horsley, the widow of a brother of the Bishop of Rochester. . . . At the last ball given by Lady Darell . . . Mrs. Jordan came into the orchestra (which is in a gallery overlooking the ballroom) muffled up and with a long close veil over her face. There she became an eye-witness of the attentions of her lover to Mrs. Horsley, and was so much piqued as to send out for him and declare that she was determined to separate from him that very night. She accordingly set off immediately for London. But the Duke followed her the next day, and the matter was made up for the present. It is said his former mistress, Polly Finch, quitted him because she could not persevere in hearing him read *The Lives of the Admirals*. She had borne this through one half of the work, but, finding that as much more remained, her patience sank under it, and a quarrel and separation ensued."

But in 1811 the Duke of Clarence was firmly resolved to separate from the woman who had been his faithful wife in everything but name for twenty years, and he went in pursuit of the most wealthy heiress in England ; Miss Tylney Long, whose income was over £40,000 a year—the grand-niece and heir, in fact, of that splendid Earl Tylney, evidence of whose wealth had come to the eye of Kelly at Naples in 1780, when he saw his magnificent equipage and band of running footmen.[1] Miss Tylney Long would have nothing to do with him, and refused the royal suitor again and again, though he promised her a repeal of the Royal Marriage Act in order to regularise her position as his wife. Probably she was outraged by the fact that the Duke was generally accompanied by one or more of his bastard FitzClarence children when he followed in pursuit of Miss Tylney Long, or, rather, of her fortune. Finally, to protect herself, she married an even more despicable man than the Duke in the person of William Pole-Wellesley, who, as already related, brought her to ruin and the grave within thirteen years.[1] The Duke of Clarence's separation from Mrs. Jordan took place in 1812, and he eventually married a German princess in 1818—Adelaide of Saxe-Meiningen—when his debts were paid by the country; and this lady made an excellent Queen Consort, sensible and unassuming, in the after-years of his succession to the Throne.

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[1] See *ante*, p. 33.

There was no calm haven of quiet and comfort for poor Mrs. Jordan in her closing days of a brief life. Weary and in failing health—she was much troubled by the spitting of blood—she made her final appearances on the stage in August, 1815. Harried by financial worries arising from the debts of one of her sons-in-law, Edward March, she sought refuge in France, first near Boulogne and then at St. Cloud, where ten months later she died, alone, on July 5th, 1816. Not one of her fourteen children[2] was with her, and the Duke of Clarence did nothing to save the woman who had provided thousands of pounds for him and them by sheer hard work. A guarantee of £2,000 would have saved her from all anxieties, and probably would have saved her life also : but there was not one to help her, or even to send a word of hope. So passed the generous, warm-hearted woman who, all her life, had given with overflowing bounty to others—her mother, her brothers and sisters, her lovers, and her children. And at the last it was left to strangers to notify her death and to put a memorial stone over her lonely grave in a damp and depressing foreign cemetery. The stone bears the words, " Remember, and weep for her." The Puritans would perhaps suggest that her text should have been, " The Wages of Sin is Death " : but more appropriately her tomb should display the words, " Put not your confidence in Princes."

When Mrs. Crouch and Kelly returned to London in September, 1791, they opened with the rest of the Drury Lane company at the King's Theatre (on the site of the present His Majesty's Theatre), their temporary quarters while Drury Lane was rebuilding. The bill consisted of a Prelude, *Poor Old Drury*, *The Haunted Tower*, and *The Panel* (an adaptation from *'Tis Well it's No Worse*, by Bickerstaffe), Mrs. Jordan coming in for much favour in the last named. At the outset, there was nearly a riot, as the doors were not opened at the stated hour, and when at last the crowd surged in, no one could find his seat. All was bustle, shouting, and confusion, and when Palmer and Parsons tried to commence the Prelude, they were howled down. They retired, and Kemble came forward; a paper was handed to him from the pit explaining the causes of the audience's discontent. Kemble stood the fire well, and assured his patrons that these grievances should be remedied before the next performance. As a matter of fact, handing up the paper was a ruse of Kemble's, and it entirely succeeded, for the storm ceased.

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[1] See *ante* p. 33.

[2] Among the descendants of Mrs. Jordan through the FitzClarences were the Earls of Munster, the Earls of Erroll, the late Duke of Fife and his daughters, the Viscounts Falkland, the Lords de l'Isle and Dudley, and many other titled members of these families who by marriage carried the player's blood into numerous ramifications of pedigree.

After the run of these pieces was over, there was some difficulty as to the next production, for Kemble had to fulfil an engagement at Newcastle, Mrs. Siddons and Mrs. Jordan were also going away, and Nancy Storace was ill. These absences crippled the company, so Sheridan gave a dinner to his remaining supporters at the Piazza Coffee House to decide on a plan of campaign. This was the first time that Kelly had met his manager on social terms. Sheridan asked him what operatic piece he advised, and he replied *Cymon*, by Garrick, for it gave opportunities for the introduction of a magnificent spectacle of a procession of "triumphal cars, drawn by horses, giants, dwarfs, leopards, lions, and tigers," which might be presumed to compensate for the absence of the stars. This rather reminds one of W. C. Macready's fury with Queen Victoria for patronising the performing lions at Drury Lane in 1838: "Read in *The Morning Post* the account of the Queen's third visit to Drury Lane Theatre to see the beasts, and of her going upon the stage after the pantomime to see them fed. . . . This a civilised country!"

So, too, Sheridan decided that the wild beasts were an excellent makeshift for Mrs. Siddons and Kemble; he thanked Kelly for the idea, and said *Cymon* should be put on with all haste, and regardless of cost. Kelly adds:

"The evening was spent with great good humour; my friend, Jack Bannister, contributed to its hilarity by giving us excellent imitations of several of the performers of both theatres. At the conclusion we adjourned to another room to take coffee; as Kemble was walking somewhat majestically towards the door, and Jack Bannister getting up to go after him, I hallooed out, 'Bannister, follow that lord, but see you mock him not,' as Bannister a moment before had been mocking the actors; the quotation was thought rather apt, and produced much laughter. Mr. Sheridan told Storace that night that he was very much pleased with me, and desired him to bring me the Sunday following to dine with him in Bruton Street; he did so and, surprising to relate, Mr. Sheridan was at home to receive us. I spent a delightful day; and, after that, to the lamented day of that great man's death I had the happiness to enjoy his confidence and society."

Sheridan fulfilled his promise, and produced *Cymon* with full magnificence, doing all justice to the procession attended by the prancing horses, wild beasts, and giants. The triumphal car in which Kelly, as Cymon, was seated with Sylvia was drawn by two beautiful horses, and at his feet in the chariot lay a lovely cupid. Kelly says: "Before the piece was brought out, I had a number of children brought to me, that I might choose a cupid. One struck me, with a fine pair of black eyes, who seemed by his looks and little gestures to be most anxious to be chosen as the representative of the God of Love; I chose him, and little did I imagine then that my little cupid would eventually become a great actor; the then little urchin was Edmund Kean. He has often told me that he ever after this period felt a regard for me, from the circumstance of my having preferred him to the other children. I consider my having been the means of introducing this great genius to the stage one of my most pleasurable recollections."

Edmund Kean (1787–1833) was at this date not more than four or five years of age, and his childhood was a time of piteous hardship. He was the illegitimate child of a man named Kean—either a tailor or a builder—and a strolling actress, Nancy Carey, who was a granddaughter of Henry Carey, a natural son of the great Lord Halifax. Such education as he had was at a school in Orange Court, Leicester Square. But that was a brief respite from his stage work, for his mother took him with her on her wanderings, and he danced and tumbled at fairs and outside taverns up and down the country. Kelly came across him again some two years after, when the new Drury Lane was opened in 1794 with *Macbeth*, and an original feature was introduced in the cavern scene of the Witches' meeting: "At the words, 'Mingle, mingle ye, that mingle may,' a great number of little boys came on as spirits; I must confess it produced something like laughter; they were, however, persisted in for several nights, but at last discontinued, for there was no keeping the little boys in order; they made such a terrible noise behind the scenes: one little urchin used to play all kinds of tricks, and that one, odd enough to say, was my ci-devant Cupid, Edmund Kean, and on his account Kemble dismissed the whole tribe of phantoms." It is said that in the cavern scene the goblins performed a wild leap-frog, and fell over each other with shouts of glee.

On January 14th, 1792, the Pantheon Theatre, where a company of Italian Opera was performing, was destroyed by fire. Kelly was with Sheridan at the time, and the two went together to Oxford Street to view the conflagration. Sheridan remarked, "Is it possible to extinguish the flames?" An Irish fireman who overheard the question cried: "For the love of heaven, Mr. Sheridan, don't make yourself uneasy, sir; by the Powers, it will soon be down sure enough; they won't have another drop of water in five minutes." Pat said this in the warmth of his heart for his fellow-countryman, for he conceived that the burning of the Pantheon must be gratifying to Sheridan as the proprietor of Drury Lane. About this date, Sheridan began to produce a series of Italian Operas at the King's Theatre, and on opera nights (Tuesday and Saturday) the Drury Lane Company performed on the other side of the street at the Little Theatre in the Haymarket (which stood on the site of the Pall Mall Restaurant, the present Haymarket Theatre being erected, in 1820, a little farther south). Stephen Storace and Kelly were appointed joint managers of the Italian Opera, and the company of vocalists included Madame Mara, Anna Storace, Bruni, Morelli, Rondini, and Kelly as tenor. Paisiello's comic opera, *Zingari in Fiera*, was put on, and there was a magnificent *corps-de-ballet*, including

Didelot, L'Abune, Novelon, Gardel, D'Egville, Millau, and Hillisberg, under the direction of the celebrated Noverre. Kelly relates an amusing incident which attended the production of the ballet of *L'Iphigénie in Aulide*, when D'Egville was the Agamemnon :

" Noverre was the greatest master of his art. But he was a passionate little fellow ; he swore and tore behind the scenes, so that at times he might really have been taken for a lunatic escaped from his keeper. I once felt the effects of his irritability. The horses, attached to the car in which D'Egville was placed, were led by two men from Astley's, one of whom was so drunk that he could not go on the stage. I had been acting in the opera, but was so eager for the affray, and so anxious that things should go on right, that I had taken off my opera dress, and put on that of a Grecian supernumerary, and, with a vizor on my face, of course was not known. I held one of the horses and all went correctly. I was standing behind the scenes, talking to one of the men, in my supernumerary dress, and perhaps rather loudly, when Noverre, who was all fire and fury, came behind me and gave me a tremendous kick. ' Taisez-vous, bête,' exclaimed he ; but when I took off my vizor, and Noverre found he had been kicking his manager, he made every possible apology, which I of course accepted, and laughed at the incident, at the same time begging him not to give me another such *striking* proof of his personal attention to the concern. By the way, the carpenters seemed, by their looks, to say that the kicking was better bestowed on me than on one of themselves."

Kelly does not mention the opera by Prince Hoare and Stephen Storace—*Dido*, which was produced at the Little Theatre on May 23rd, 1792—though he sung in it the rôle of Iarbas. Madame Mara was the Dido, and Mrs. Crouch again masqueraded as a pretty youth in the guise of Æneas. An indiscreet female admirer of hers, too warmly interested in the charms of her own sex, sent some verses to *The Thespian Magazine*, wherein she imagined Aphrodite (or herself) exclaiming to Mrs. Crouch :

That slender frame, and smooth, unbearded chin,
Those ruby lips, soft eyes, and silken skin ;
That voice, which emulates celestial song,
Could they *to* brave *Æneas e'er belong ?*

. . . lovely page,
His false *appearance will deceive the age.*
How can that form in warlike habit shine,
Which, in the female *garb, resembles* mine?

Kelly also omits to record that Haydn was in London at this date, when six of his Twelve Grand Symphonies were produced under his direction. Storace gave a dinner in honour of the great composer, the other guests being the Maras and Kelly. This was on Sunday, June 3rd, 1792, and Haydn, in his mention of the event, adds the comment, "Sapienti panem."

In the summer of 1792, Mrs. Crouch and Kelly were engaged to sing at the Musical Festival at Oxford, but on the way down Mrs. Crouch was attacked by one of her sudden illnesses. Kelly's anxiety and solicitude were intense:

"Mrs. Crouch, an attached friend of hers (Mrs. Williams), and I set off in a travelling carriage for Oxford, where we had lodgings taken for us at the moderate rate of twelve guineas for the festival week. When we got to Salt Hill, Mrs. Crouch was attacked by dreadful shiverings and spasms; and when we reached Henley found herself unable to proceed. I immediately sent for medical assistance and had the good fortune to meet with Mr. Bayley, a skilful surgeon and apothecary who found his patient in such a state that her removal would have been undertaken at the hazard of her life. We had to sing at the festival the next morning but there was no alternative; I was obliged to leave her and post to Oxford by myself: I got there just as the performance was beginning. I informed Dr. Hayes, the conductor, of Mrs. Crouch's illness, who advised me to go after church to Dr. Wall, the principal physician in Oxford, and prevail upon him to visit Mrs. Crouch at Henley. The Doctor's house was full of company, and he had a large party to dine with him; notwithstanding which he instantly put post horses to his carriage, and went off to Henley.

"Immediately after the evening concert was over I set off for that place myself, and there found the worthy Doctor, who told me his patient was in great danger. He remained with her four days and nights: each morning at break of day I was obliged to post to Oxford, and after the business of the day return at night to Henley. The fatigue was wearing to the body, not to speak of the agony of singing in the church in the morning and at the concerts in the evening with an aching heart and anxious mind. On the fifth day the worthy Dr. Wall pronounced his patient out of danger and took his departure for Oxford, leaving her under the care of Mr. Bayley. We were obliged to remain there nearly four weeks, at the end of which period I had the gratification to see my valued friend restored to her usual health and beauty. We went to Worcester and Birmingham for a few nights, and returned to London for the opening of the winter season at the King's Theatre, October 18th."

The pieces now, 1792, produced here were *The Prisoner*, written by the Rev. Mr. Rose, a master at the Charterhouse, with music by Attwood. Kelly played the part of Marcos, and sang his two songs, "Despair Around my Head," and "Goddess of Liberty, my Soul Inspire!" with great effect. Mrs. Crouch warbled a pathetic Arcadian ballad, "Poor Carlos sued a Beauteous Maid," in the characteristic taste of the period, "with the most affecting expression, and was loudly encored and applauded," while Master Welsh, as Narcisso, "sung his airs delightfully." "Master Welsh" was evidently Thomas Welsh (1781–1848), of Wells, whose mother was a daughter of Thomas Linley the Elder; the boy was therefore a nephew of Mrs. Sheridan, and it was Sheridan who persuaded Linley to bring his grandson to London to sing professionally. Thomas Welsh, who inherited all the musical and singing ability of the Linley family—"a nest of nightingales," as they were called—was a chorister in the cathedral of his native Wells, "where his singing so attracted lovers of music from the neighbouring towns that on the Saturdays the City hotels felt the increase of visitors, and on Sundays the church was crowded to excess." He was only eleven years of age when he came to London to sing in *The Prisoner*, which Attwood composed expressly to exhibit Tom Welsh's gifts. The date of this appearance is placed after 1796 in the notice of Thomas Welsh in *The Dictionary of National Biography*, but it is evident, from the allusions to the boy in the Memoirs of Kelly and Mrs. Crouch, that he appeared in *The Prisoner* in 1792, and, as will be seen presently, in the opera of *The Cherokee* in 1794. In 1795, Welsh had an important benefit at Drury Lane with *The Adopted Child*, a musical piece composed for him by Attwood. Later, after singing in many operas, he had a period as actor, and then settled down as a composer and teacher of music. His opera of *Kamskatka* was produced at Covent Garden; his pupils included Charles Edward Horn (1786–1849), the very successful Caspar of *Der Freischütz* at Drury Lane in 1824 and the composer of *Cherry Ripe*; John Sinclair; Miss Stephens (later Countess of Essex); and Mary Anne Wilson, who married Welsh. He died at Brighton on January 24th, 1848.

The Prisoner was succeeded by Stephen Storace's new opera, *The Pirates*, which was produced on November 20th with a powerful cast, comprising Dignum, Kelly, Suett, Parsons, and John Bannister; Mrs. Crouch, Miss De Camp, Mrs. Bland, and Signora Storace. Kelly says: "The scenery was picturesque and beautiful, from designs taken on the spot by Stephen Storace at Naples. The magic-lantern scene, representing Hero and Leander, and the crossing of the Hellespont, was peculiarly beautiful. Mr. Sheridan directed that no expense should be spared in decorating the opera. The music was a masterpiece; but, above all, the finale at the end of the first act, which I thought Storace's *chef d'œuvre*, and worthy to be placed by the side of Mozart's first finale to the *Nozze di Figaro*."

On January 21st, 1793, there was not any play performed from respect to the memory of the unfortunate monarch, Louis XVI, who was murdered in Paris on that day. Kemble, without consulting Sheridan, closed the theatre. Sheridan, who was out of town, arrived late that evening, and, finding there was no play, came to Kelly's house in Suffolk Street accompanied by Lord Howick (later Earl Grey),[1] and was highly incensed at the shutting up of the theatre upon such an occasion; for, he said, it was an invariable maxim with him that neither politics nor religion should ever be taken notice of in his playhouse;

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[1] The second Earl Grey (1764–1845), the statesman to whom tribute was paid on the statue of the third Lord Holland, which until recently stood in the grounds of Holland House, visible from the Kensington Road, but is now in the rose-garden on the north side of the house:

Nephew of Fox, and friend of Grey,
Be this my meed of fame,
That those who know me best may say,
"*He tarnished neither name.*"

though probably no man deplored the tragical event more sincerely than he did.

On June 20th, 1793, the Drury Lane Company in part, reinforced by Colman's Summer Company, performed *The London Hermit,* by John O'Keefe, who had played Jessamy for Kelly in that production of *Lionel and Clarissa* in Dublin, in 1779, on the eve of the boy's departure for Italy. He dined with Kelly, who says, " But, alas ! how changed I found him. When he acted Jessamy, he was a fine, sprightly, animated young man : now, poor fellow, broken down, and almost blind ; but still full of pleasantry and anecdote."

In the summer, Mrs. Crouch and Kelly, as usual, played at the northern provincial towns, and then went on to Ireland.[1] At this period *The Beggar's Opera* was prohibited by the Irish Government, but Kelly, wishing to play the piece for his benefit, and knowing it would ensure an overflowing house, called on his friend, Mrs. St. John Jefferyes, of Blarney Castle, Co. Cork, to request her influence with her formidable brother, the Earl of Clare, Lord Chancellor, who was to experience such unpopularity later at the time of the Union, and who, when killed by a fall from his horse, had his carcase pelted with dead cats by the populace. Mrs. Jefferyes pleaded Kelly's cause with such zeal that her brother consented, and *The Beggar's Opera* was performed then, and revived often in the following years, though it is difficult to understand now where the political allusions are which caused its banning in the eighteenth century. During his stay in Dublin, Kelly saw a great deal of the veteran actor, Thomas King (1730–1805), who had been engaged for Drury Lane by Garrick as far back as 1748, and was the original Sir Peter Teazle at the first performance of *The School for Scandal* in 1777, and the original Puff at the first performance of *The Critic* two years later :

" During the whole of my friend King's stay in Dublin, he used to come every night after acting, and sup with me, and delightful indeed was his society. He had an inexhaustible fund of anecdote, which he told in a way peculiar to himself; and, like Anacreon, blended to the last the flower of youth with the hoary frost of age. I was standing behind the scenes, in Crow Street, one night, and I saw him for once rather put out of temper. The play was *The School for Scandal*; he was at the side wing, waiting to go on the stage as Sir Peter Teazle. At the stage-door was seated an immensely fat woman, the widow of Ryder,[1] the celebrated Irish actor, who had been the original Sir Peter Teazle, in Dublin, in the summer of 1777. The lusty dame, looking at King, who was standing close to her, holloaed out, with an implacable brogue, and the lungs of a Stentor, ‘ Arrah, agra! there was but one Sir Peter Teazle in the world, and he is now in Heaven, and more is the pity. Ah! Tom Ryder! Tom Ryder! look down upon Sir Peter Teazle here, your dirty representative.’ And after this complimentary harangue, the wretched lady began to howl most piteously, to the great annoyance of all behind the scenes, but most particularly to that of King, who appeared really disconcerted. However, the widow was removed, tranquillity was restored, the cloud dispersed, and King acted with his usual excellence.”

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[1] Kelly and Mrs. Crouch were earning high salaries, though the amounts would not be so regarded at the present day. *The Morning Post* of January 2nd, 1794, commenting on the Dublin Theatre, observes : " This winter company is the greatest and most respectable that ever amused the People of the Metropolis. When we read the names of Siddons, King, and those popular performers, Kelly and Mrs. Crouch, it is not surprising that the great encouragement given to the Theatre, while it enriches the Manager, gives him the means of paying them an immense sum for their performances."

On the morning arranged for his departure, Kelly received a call from Richard Daly’s stage-manager, who said that they were going to perform *The Mountaineers* on the following evening for the first time, and as he had seen the piece in London, would he advise what scenery, dresses, and decorations should be provided. Kelly laughed heartily at the idea of having only one day to prepare all these things, and said to Mrs. Crouch, “ I would give anything to see this production, and how they will do it in the time available.” “ Well,” she replied, “ that matter is easily arranged; the term of our lodgings is not up for four days to come; and we are not obliged to be at Manchester for our engagement until this day week; send for our trunks, and let us stop.” So they stayed, and saw *The Mountaineers*, which, Kelly says, “ was a discredit to any barn. But blessed are the ways of

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[1] Thomas Ryder (1735–90), originally a printer, acted under Thomas Sheridan at the Smock Alley Theatre, Dublin, which theatre he managed in later years (1772–82), with little success.

Providence : had not my apparently idle curiosity induced us to remain, most certain it is that we should have met a watery grave ; the Liverpool packet, in which we were to have sailed, foundered on the Welsh coast, and every soul on board perished.

"Three days after that melancholy event, we took our passage in a packet for Holyhead, where we arrived safe, after a pleasant passage of seven hours, and set off to fulfil our engagement at Manchester. We went to the Bridgewater Arms Hotel, and in the coffee-room I saw a London news-paper, mentioning the loss of the Liverpool packet ; and among the names of the unfortunate passengers who were lost were Mrs. Crouch's and my own, with an elegiac eulogium, deploring our fate, and making many handsome remarks upon us.[1] Never did I read praise of myself with such unfeigned and lively feelings of pleasure. On the following day, in another London paper, was a letter addressed to the editor, with Mr. Frank Aickin's[2] name forged to it, stating that he had just returned from the funeral of poor Kelly and Mrs. Crouch, who were followed to the grave by a vast concourse of people, all bitterly lamenting their untimely end.

"There was an odd coincidence at the time. Mrs. Crouch (who was always kindly attentive to her father), before she left Liverpool to go to Dublin, gave Mr. Packer,[3] of Drury Lane Theatre, with whom she was intimate, a paper for Mr. Phillips, wherein she bequeathed to him, in case any accident happened to her, a certain property ; but begged of Mr. Packer not to deliver the paper to Mr. Phillips unless he heard that any disaster had befallen her. Packer, when he heard of her supposed death, went immediately to Mr. Phillips, who was confined to his bed with the gout, to reveal to him the melancholy catastrophe, and deliver the paper consigned to his charge. Just as he was about to open the business, the postman came to the door, with a letter from Mrs. Crouch herself, to her father, dated at Manchester, informing him of her being in excellent health and spirits. On our appearance at Manchester, our reception was enthusiastic, as it was everywhere, both on and off the stage; we were well known on the roads, and at all the inns we went to, on our way to Shrewsbury, Birmingham, and London, we were overwhelmed with congratulations on our safety; and, after all our adventures, arrived, at the beginning of February, in Suffolk Street, where we found my friend, Stephen Storace, waiting for us."

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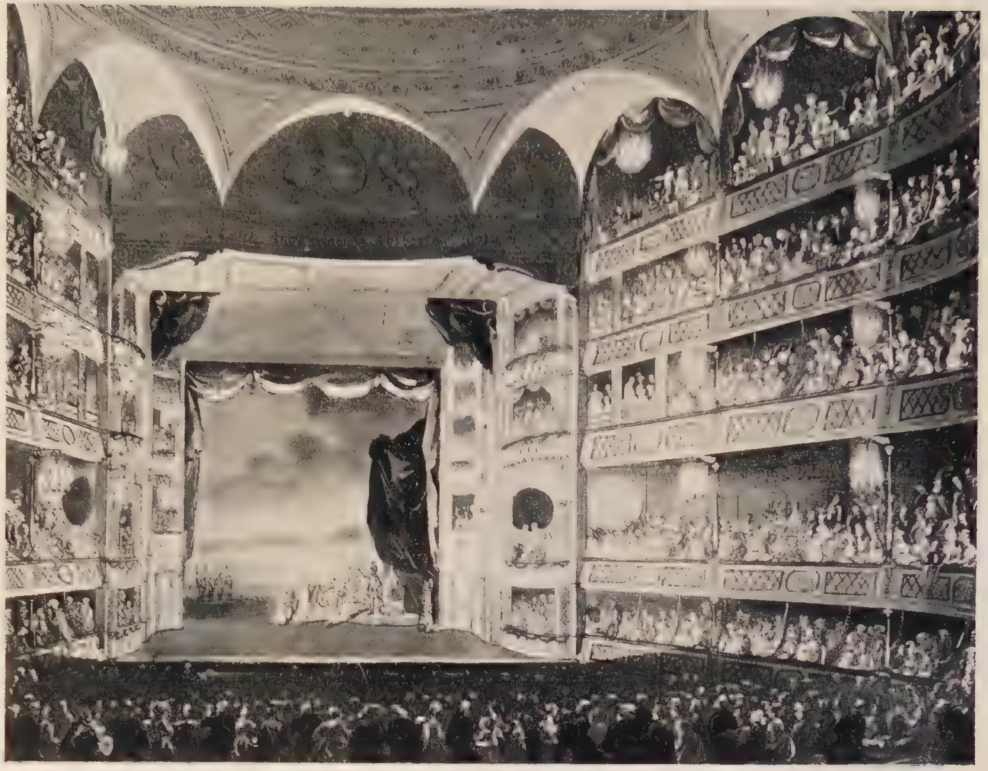
[1] Apropos of this matter, the censorious Mrs. Oxberry remarks in her *Dramatic Biography* : "The public prints, those laudable promoters of scandal and fiction, reported that Mrs. Crouch and Mr. Kelly had been drowned and cast on the sands, locked in one another's arms. As to the latter end of this report, we will not undertake to dispute it ; but that such experienced practitioners as Mr. Kelly and Mrs. Crouch chose the sands for such an exhibition is more than even the editor of *The Times* would like to assert."

[2] Francis Aickin, who died in 1805, was the son of a weaver in Dublin. He mostly played at the Smock Alley Theatre, Dublin, but he was at Drury Lane in 1765 as Dick in *Confederacy*. Later he was manager of the theatres at Liverpool and Edinburgh.

[3] John Hayman Packer (1730–1806), originally a saddler, had acted at Drury Lane under Garrick. He did not retire until the age of seventy-five.

On February 3rd, 1794, Kelly was present at the Little Theatre in the Haymarket, when George III and Queen Charlotte were there to witness, by their command, three pieces by Prince Hoare, *My Grandmother*; *No Song, No Supper*; and *The Prize.* The crowd was immense, and when the doors were opened, in going down the steps which led to the pit, three or four persons slipped and fell; the pressure of the crowd caused others to trip over the fallen bodies, with the result that there was a panic; sixteen persons were trampled to death, and many more suffered from broken limbs. The news of the fatal accident was kept from the King and Queen until after the conclusion of the performance, "when they evinced the deepest sorrow and regret at the event."

On March 12th, 1794, the New Drury Lane Theatre was opened—in less than three years after the demolition of the old building. The first nights were devoted to a sacred oratorio, with Handel's Coronation Anthem; the orchestra, representing the interior of a Gothic Cathedral, had "a most sublime effect." The theatrical company was of rare lustre, for Kemble as Macbeth, Mrs. Siddons as Lady Macbeth, and their brother Charles as Malcolm, followed on March 21st; John Palmer was Macduff, while Parsons, Moody, and Baddeley as the three witches must have been wonderful. Kelly arranged the incidental music, and provided the Weird Sisters with an awesome melody for their gentle chanson, "He must, he will, he SHALL spill much more blood!" The Epilogue, written by George Colman, was spoken by the fascinating Miss Farren, and in the course of this one is surprised to find mention of a safety curtain,



INTERIOR OF THE THIRD DRURY LANE THEATRE, DESTROYED BY FIRE IN 1809

From the picture by Rowlandson and Pugin, 1808

a device one would have been inclined to have assigned to a much later date in theatrical history. Miss Farren explained "to the audience the utility of an iron curtain and a reservoir of water, in case of accidents by fire, which told remarkably well at the time, although the theatre was subsequently burnt to the ground. It ended with a well-turned compliment to Shakspere, whose statue was discovered under a mulberry-tree at the rising of the iron curtain." This Epilogue was in merry vein :

Our pile is rock, more durable than brass,
Our decorations, gossamer and gas . . .
The very ravages of fire we scout,
For we have wherewithal to put it out ;
In ample reservoirs, our firm reliance,
Whose streams set conflagration at defiance.
Panic alone avoid, let none begin it—
Should the flame spread, sit still, there's nothing in it—
We'll undertake to drown you all in half a minute.
Behold, obedient to the Prompter's bell,
Our tide shall flow, and real waters swell . . .
The pure element its course shall hold,
Rush on the scene, and o'er the stage be rolled.
[Scene rises, and discovers water.]
How like you our aquatics ?—Need we fear ?
Some Critic, with a hydrophobia here,
Whose timid caution—caution's self might tire,
And doubts if water can extinguish fire ?
If such there be, still let him rest secure,
For we have made ' assurance doubly sure.'
Consume the scenes, your safety still is certain ;
Presto !—for proof, let down the iron curtain ! . . .
[Iron curtain here let down.]
So beaux and ye plumed belles all perched in front,
You're safe, at all events, depend upon't ;
So never rise like fluttered birds together,
The hottest fire sha'n't singe a single feather ;
No ! I assure our generous benefactors,
'Twould only *burn the* scenery *and the* actors.

On June 9th, 1794, was produced the splendid musical spectacle of *Lodoiska*, translated by Kemble from the French, and with music arranged by Storace from the compositions of Cherubini and Kreutzer; for two versions of this play, with music respectively by these two composers, had been played simultaneously in Paris. Kelly says: "The overture to *Lodoiska* is one of the most spirited compositions I ever heard, and was admirably played by the Drury Lane band. Storace had the second movement of it struck off in an *allegro spirituoso* time, which electrified the audience, who called for its repetition with vehement applause; yet when I went to Paris, I heard the same overture, so brilliantly performed at Drury Lane, played slow, by which it lost all its effect. I was introduced to Kreutzer, the composer of it, and sat down to the pianoforte, and played it in the time in which it was played in England; he thought himself the effect would be better, and on August 15th, 1802, Napoleon's birthday, there was a grand orchestra in the Thuilleries, conducted by Kreutzer, who was the first violin; he led his overture to *Lodoiska* in the same time as it was played at Drury Lane; the effect was prodigious, and shouts of applause followed."

It was in *Lodoiska* one evening that Kelly had a dramatic opportunity of displaying in public his well-known devotion to Mrs. Crouch, and the sensibilities of the audience responded in full measure to a scene that was superb in its theatrical detail and so appropriate to the facts of the private life together of the two players. Thus Kelly describes it:

"In the last scene, when Mrs. Crouch was in the burning castle, the wind blew the flames close to her (and scorched her); but still she had sufficient fortitude not to move from her situation. Seeing her in such peril, I ran up the bridge, which was a great height from the ground, towards the tower, in order to rescue her; just as I was quitting the platform a carpenter prematurely took out one of its supports: down I fell, and at the same moment the fiery tower, in which was Mrs. Crouch, sank down in a blaze, with a violent crash; she uttered a scream of terror.[1] Providentially I was not hurt by the fall, and, catching her in my arms, scarcely knowing what I was doing, I carried her to the front of the stage, a considerable distance from the place where we fell. The applause was loud and continued. In fact, had we rehearsed the scene as it happened, it could not have appeared half so natural, or produced half so great an effect. I always afterwards carried her to the front of the stage in a similar manner, and it never failed to produce great applause. Such are, at times, the effects of accident. On that night, Mr. Sheridan came to sup with us; and I told him I was lucky in not having broken my neck. He left us earlier than usual to go to the Duchess of Devonshire's. The Duchess, who had been at the theatre, asked him if I were much hurt; to which, with his usual good-nature in making blunders for me, he replied, 'Not in the least; I have just left him very well, and in good spirits.'"

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[1] M. J. Young, who wrote the *Memoirs* of Mrs. Crouch, suggests that her scream of terror was on account of her anxiety for Kelly's safety and not for her own imminent danger from the scorching flames—" she *felt* them, but could not

Sheridan added: "Kelly put a very puzzling question to me, which was, 'Suppose, Mr. Sheridan, I had been killed by the fall; who would have *maintained me* for the rest of my life?'" So, like a good showman, Kelly turned his alarming accident into an excellent advertisement, and, what must have pleased him most of all, he had excited the solicitude of a Duchess, and that one the most lovely and famous of all time, Georgiana Duchess of Devonshire, the Queen of the age of Fox and Sheridan, of whom the Prince of Wales said, when he heard of her death, "Then the best-natured and best-bred woman in England is gone."

Being extremely up-to-date, the management of Drury Lane produced on July 2nd a piece entitled *The Glorious First of June*, commemorating Lord Howe's great naval victory of June 1st, 1794, when six French battle-ships were captured. Kemble spoke the "elegant prologue with great feeling." Storace and Kelly gave some new songs, and the whole

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retire without spoiling the scene; therefore, with true *martial* fortitude, she maintained her post of danger at the hazard of her life, until Mr. Kelly, alarmed for her safety, flew hastily to snatch her from danger, when his foot slipped, and she beheld him fall from a considerable height, and *then* she uttered a scream of terror. Providentially he was not hurt by the fall, and in a moment caught her in his arms. Scarcely knowing what he did, he hurried her to the front of the stage with rapidity and undissembled terror; she, *actually* scorched by the flames, and alarmed first by Mr. Kelly's fall and then at his precipitancy, was nearly insensible of her situation."

concluded with "an awfully grand sea-fight and sumptuous fête in honour of our glorious victory." Thus Jingoism by no means originated with the Great Macdermott in the Victorian era, though his famous song coined the word. The same spirit prevailed in the songs at the theatres during the long wars with France in the eighteenth century. At Drury Lane Theatre in 1784, in *Harlequin Junior, or the Magic Cestus*, was a scene representing the Siege of Gibraltar, "when the destruction of the floating batteries by General Elliot was gloriously terrific, and the plaudits of a British audience at such a scene of triumph for Old England could only be excelled in noise by the sound of her destructive guns. . . . And the following, which ought to be impressed on the minds of Britons, not only received shouts of applause, but the whole house joined in the chorus. It was sung by the performers habited as British sailors :

Old England, to thyself be true,
  Firm as this rock *thy fame shall stand* ;
The sword that Elliot—Curtis drew,
  Be never wanted through the land.
Join then this prayer—Our foes shall rue,
Let England to herself be true !

Though foes on foes contending throng,
  And dreadful havock threaten round,
Thy flaming bolts shall whirl along,
  Throughout the world thy thunders sound,
Nought then on earth shall make us *rue,*
Let England to herself be true !

What though no grand alliance share
  Each warlike, envied *deed of thine,*
'Tis doubly glorious *thus to dare*
  Against the world in arms to shine.
Nought then shall make Britannia rue,
Let Britons to themselves be true.

"May British valour and British loyalty ever afford glorious scenes for the English theatres."

(M. J. Young.)

During this summer of 1794, Kelly and Mrs. Crouch played at the Edinburgh Theatre during Leith Races. The manager was Jackson, whose wife was a popular tragic actress of the time in the north. A member of the company named Wood was a great oddity. Kelly relates of him :

" His great ambition was to do everything that Garrick used to do ; he rose at the same hour, shaved, breakfasted, and dined at the same hour ; ate and drank whatever he heard was Garrick's taste ; in short, nothing could please him more than to copy Garrick implicitly, and to be thought to do so. I was walking with him one day ; and, knowing his weak point, assured him that King had often told me that when Garrick was to perform any part to which he wished to give his whole strength and energy, he used to prevail upon Mrs. Garrick to accompany him to his dressing-room at the theatre, and, for an hour before the play began, rub his head, as hard as she could, with hot napkins, till she produced copious perspiration ; and the harder he was rubbed, and the more he was temporarily annoyed by it, the more animation he felt in acting. This (as I thought it) harmless joke of mine, turned out a matter of serious importance to poor Mrs. Wood ; for a long time afterwards, whenever he had to act, particularly in any new part, he actually made her go to his dressing-room, as I had suggested, and rub away, till *she* was ready to drop with fatigue, and *he* with the annoyance which her exertions produced. The effect of this upon his performance, however, did not, by any means, keep pace with the labour."

On leaving Scotland, Mrs. Crouch and Kelly proceeded in their own comfortable travelling-carriage to the lakes of Cumberland and Westmorland. They stayed two days at Keswick, and visited Lord William Gordon (son of the third Duke of Gordon, and brother of Lord George Gordon, of Riots fame, who had died in Newgate the previous year). Then to York, to spend a night with Tate Wilkinson, where all was pleasant except for a culinary quarrel between the gourmetic actor and his wife. Mrs. Wilkinson had been guilty of the enormous crime of forgetting to serve apple-sauce with a huge roasted goose, and all through dinner her husband kept exclaiming, " Fie ! Mrs. Wilkinson, oh ! fie ! No apple-sauce, ma'am !

Mrs. W. is a mighty good woman, ma'am. But goose without apple-sauce! Ugh!"

It was during this trip that Mrs. Crouch suffered a curious accident which adversely affected her professional career. While she was driving in her travelling-carriage, the vehicle overturned; a dressing-bag fell on her throat, and her vocal powers were injured for some time after the mishap, which, indeed, was the cause of later and permanent injury to her voice. A few years previously she had been hurt in another carriage accident, which is thus described by Mrs. Oxberry in *Dramatic Biography*:

"At the end of January, 1788 . . . in going to the theatre in a hackney coach, it overturned, and her face was dreadfully cut by the glass. She had only the nurse with her sister's Horrebow's child in the coach, and by throwing herself between the baby and the window to preserve him, when she felt the coach going over, she received the injury, but rejoiced in the midst of her sufferings to see the little creature perfectly safe." She was attended by Cruikshank, the surgeon of Leicester Place (grandfather of Mrs. G. P. R. James), who extracted many pieces of glass from the wounds: "slight scars always remained, which rather injured the delicacy of her face."

Young, in his *Memoirs of Mrs. Crouch*, says that when the heavy dressing-case fell on Mrs. Crouch's throat "she nearly suffered strangulation before she could be extricated. This unfortunate accident so greatly injured her vocal powers that for some time she was totally unable to sing. The most eminent of the faculty were consulted, and various means tried to restore her voice to its former strength; but, unhappily, that was beyond the power of art; she herself thought that she found the greatest benefit from being bled in the throat with leeches, an operation to which she frequently submitted. When she was able to sing, her voice had lost much of its clearness and power; yet, by taking her songs lower, she continued to sing with great applause, and satisfied the public far more than she did herself; but the charming expression she gave her songs and her excellent acting could always give delight."

After performing in Lancaster and Birmingham, the players returned to Suffolk Street in readiness for the opening of the winter season. One of the first pieces produced at Drury Lane in November, 1794, was *Nobody*, by Mrs. Robinson, the once celebrated and beautiful Perdita ; it only ran for three nights, although Mrs. Jordan, Miss De Camp, and Jack Bannister did their best, for the play was a satire on the prevailing feminine craze of gambling ; it was hissed by fine ladies, who also sent their footmen with orders to swell the sibilant chorus.

At this date Mrs. Robinson was still a comparatively young woman, thirty-six, but already failing in health, for she died six years later. Mary Darby was born in Bristol, in a house of romantic aspects adjoining the cathedral. She was married to Thomas Robinson at the early age of sixteen, and two years later made a successful appearance as Juliet at Drury Lane, under the auspices of Garrick and Sheridan. She played in a number of dramas, and it was as Perdita, in *The Winter's Tale*, on December 3rd, 1779, that she attracted the attention of the seventeen-year-old Prince of Wales. She became his first mistress, and an establishment was provided for her. The connection lasted until just before the Prince came of age, when the lady was heartlessly dismissed. A bond that had been given to her, promising the sum of £20,000 when the Prince of Wales came of age, proved to be as nebulous as the bond his younger brother, the Duke of Clarence, gave to Mrs. Jordan in later years, and Mrs. Robinson was glad to accept an annuity of £500 a year instead. She afterwards, for sixteen years, was the mistress of Colonel Tarleton, of whom Reynolds painted such a spirited portrait. In her declining years of dropsy and other ills, Mrs. Robinson indulged in a good deal of literary composition, chiefly poetry. She contributed a series of satirical odes to *The Morning Post* under the name of "Tabitha Bramble," but melancholy and retrospective poems were more natural to her pen. She lived with her daughter in St. James's Place, where she gave very pleasant *petit soupers*. Mrs. Crouch and Kelly were constant visitors here ; the two ladies had a great regard for each other, and no doubt compared their notes on the Prince of Wales, for both had shared his bed. He, too, visited Perdita here, but only as a friend from the past. Kelly often talked with Mrs. Robinson of her brothers, John and George Darby, merchants of Leghorn, whom he had met at that place some fourteen years before. Mrs. Robinson died in 1800, and was buried at Old Windsor.

On November 20th, 1794, the opera of *The Cherokee* was produced at Drury Lane. Kelly sang the part of an English officer, and Mrs. Crouch and Thomas Welsh (1781–1848), then a boy of thirteen, did well.[1] Miss Romanzini (Mrs. Jordan's sister-in-law previously mentioned[2]) was also in this opera:

"That delightful warbler, Mrs. Bland, in the character of a Welsh peasant, sang that ballad, afterwards so universally popular, 'A Little Bird Sang on a Spray,' with great simplicity and truth: indeed, what did she not sing well? As far as her powers went, she was perfect as an English ballad-singer. I remember dining one day with those two great musicians, Haydn and Pleyel, and requesting them to go to Drury Lane, and hear a female singer, saying, that in my opinion, no real judge of the art could find a single blemish in her style or taste. They went to hear Mrs. Bland, and told me that my praise was not at all exaggerated. I have at different times composed a number of songs for her, and may safely say that she never introduced a grace unseasonable, or one that was not full of taste and meaning. Mrs. Bland, when Miss Romanzini, first sang at Hughes's Riding School, now the Circus, in St. George's Fields, in the spring of 1773; she then travelled to Breslau; and made her first appearance at Drury Lane on October 24th, 1786, in *Richard Cœur de Lion*."

Next came Cumberland's play, *The Wheel of Fortune*, and some three weeks before, on going into the prompter's room, Kelly found Kemble sealing up a parcel. He said, "My dear Mic, wait a moment until I send this off to Cumberland. It is a comedy of his, which I write to tell him is accepted; and, if I am not greatly mistaken, there is a character in it which will do something for *me*; at least, I feel that I can do something with *it*. Mind you and Nancy (meaning Mrs. Crouch) must promise to see me act it the first night." They, of course, did so, and ever after associated Kemble with the part, Penruddock, in which he was admirably supported by Miss Farren as Emily, and Suett as

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[1] See *ante*, pp. 209–210.

[2] See *ante*, pp. 167 and 176.

Lawyer Weazle. In fact, after Suett's death, Kemble, in lamenting the event to Kelly, said, "My dear Mic, Penruddock has lost a powerful ally in Suett. Sir, I have acted the part with many Weazles and good ones too, but none of them could work up my passions to the pitch Suett did; he had a comical, impertinent way of thrusting his head into my face, which called forth all my irritable sensations; the effect upon me was irresistible."

Although a good friend, Kemble was liable to vent all the irritability of the artistic temperament upon his company. Thus he had a tremendous row on one occasion with Mrs. Crouch about her stage costume, whereupon she refused to appear, and he fined her the statutory five guineas. Another time, Mrs. Jordan declined to appear because Kemble had refused to allow her brother, George Bland, behind the scenes and had fined the door-keeper five shillings for permitting the actor to enter the stage-door. But Kemble's most unfortunate display of temper was in the affair with Miss De Camp, his future sister-in-law (for she married Charles Kemble in 1806), when he had to make a public apology in *The Morning Chronicle* of January 28th, 1795:

"I, John Philip Kemble, of The Theatre Royal, do adopt this method of publicly apologising to Miss De Camp for the very improper and unjustifiable behaviour I was lately guilty of towards her, which I do further declare her conduct and character had in no instance, authorised, but on the contrary do know and believe both to be irreproachable."

In May, 1795, an opera was performed at Drury Lane in which Kelly acted an Irish character. He had left his native country so early in his life that he never had any trace of what he termed the "implacable brogue" of his compatriots. So in this play his friend Johnstone had taken great pains in advance to instruct Kelly in the brogue. But on the eventful night he felt he had scarcely presented a genuine Hibernian. And he was right, for when he went into the green-room after the opera, Sheridan said to him, "Bravo! Kelly! very well indeed; upon my honour, I never before heard you speak such good English in all my life." Possibly this was a comic opera entitled *Jack of Newbury*, described as "written by Mr. Hooke, jun., and composed by Mr. Hooke, sen.," and who were in reality the father and brother of Theodore Hook. The father, James Hook (1746–1827), of Norwich, became the well-known organist of Marylebone and Vauxhall Gardens, and the composer of over two thousand songs, such as *The Lass of Richmond Hill* and *Within a Mile.* His elder son, James Hook (1772–1828), later Dean of Worcester, was quite a young man when he wrote *Jack of Newbury*, which contained a " magnificent masque in honour of the royal nuptials " —those of the Prince of Wales and Caroline of Brunswick, celebrated on April 8th, 1795. Kelly, Mrs. Crouch, Anna Storace, Mrs. Bland, Dignum, Suett, Bannister, and Palmer, all appeared in the piece.

During this season, 1795, Harriot Mellon (1777–1837) made her first appearance at Drury Lane, she upon whom Fortune was to shower such wonderful gifts. The daughter of a strolling actress who married a lieutenant of the Madras Infantry, Harriot Mellon had acted successfully at the age of ten as Little Pickle in *The Spoiled Child.* In 1794, when playing in Stafford, she was seen by Sheridan, who was M.P. for that place. He had her brought to Drury Lane, where at the age of eighteen she made her début as Lydia Languish in *The Rivals*, and two years later she played Hero in *Much Ado About Nothing,* to the Benedick and Beatrice of Kemble and Miss Farren. She was never a great actress, but her archness, milkmaid complexion, fine figure, bold dark eyes, and raven-black hair, carried her to realms where greater players never travelled. It was about 1805 that she met the wealthy banker, Thomas Coutts. He was seventy years old, and his wife was out of her mind. In the course of the next ten years, he settled upon Harriot Mellon at least £200,000, and bestowed upon her wonderful jewels and plate. In 1810 the Holly Lodge estate at Highgate was purchased. Mrs. Coutts died in 1815, and four days after her funeral the widower married Harriot Mellon. It was a very happy marriage, for the aged banker was devoted to the end, and, despite her gaucheries, she was an excellent hostess[1] at Holly Lodge and at the great house in Stratton Street, where the Prince Regent and the Royal Dukes were guests (and glad to borrow money from the wealthy Coutts). When Coutts died in 1822, he left his immense fortune to his widow. She was a warm-hearted, generous woman, and assigned half the income to her husband's daughters by his first wife, although these ladies had always treated her with rudeness and contempt. They were the Countess of Guilford (wife of the third Earl),[1] the Marchioness of Bute, and Lady Burdett. In 1827, at the age of fifty, Mrs. Coutts married the Duke of St. Albans, who was twenty-six. The Duchess died in 1837, and bequeathed her entire fortune back to Angela Burdett, a granddaughter of Thomas Coutts, and this lady in 1871 became the Baroness Burdett Coutts (1814–1906). Kelly did not live to see Harriot Mellon a duchess, which would have gratified both his love of the Stage and the Peerage. But he did note, "She was a handsome girl, and much esteemed; and in gratitude I feel called upon to say that, both as Miss Mellon and Mrs. Coutts, I have received from her the most marked and friendly attentions."

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[1] Sir Walter Scott, who liked Harriot Mellon, notes in his diary, November 25th, 1825 : " It is the fashion to attend Mrs. Coutts's parties, and to abuse her. I have always found her a kind, friendly woman, without either affectation or insolence in the display of her wealth, most willing to do good, if the means be shown to her. She can be very entertaining, too, as she speaks without scruple of her stage life."

At Drury Lane on March 12th, 1796, was produced *The Iron Chest*, an opera written by George Colman the younger, with music by Stephen Storace. The essential incidents of the story were taken from William Godwin's novel, *Caleb Williams*, which had achieved great fame two years previously, and as late as 1831 was "irrevocably pronounced the best in our language." But the opera was dogged by ill fortune and did not attain the same success, despite the fine cast:

Sir Edward Mortimer . .	*John Philip Kemble*
Barbara	*Anna Storace*
Judith	*Miss De Camp*
Armstrong	*Michael Kelly*
Adam Winterton . . .	*J. W. Dodd*
Helen	*Miss Farren*

On the first night the audience found the part of Winterton verbose and tedious, and hissed the actor, James William Dodd,

[1] See p. 235 later.

an excellent and popular player.[1] He was greatly shocked by the painful experience, and took the matter so much to heart that he acted no more after that season and died the same year. Colman placed all the blame for the failure of this initial production, which he said "fell to pieces after four days' wear," on the shoulders of Kemble. In the preface to the first edition of *The Iron Chest* (1796), which, as it was later suppressed, is now a bibliographical rarity, he complained that the principal actors, including Kemble, were habitually absent from rehearsals, and on the first night he says, "I found Mr. Kemble in his dressing-room a short time before the curtain was drawn up taking opium pills; and nobody who is acquainted with that gentleman will doubt me when I say that they are a medicine which he has long been in the habit of swallowing." At the next performance Colman complains that Kemble mumbled his lines in a dull and lifeless way, and, passing from comments on opium pills, he indulges in a sarcastic diatribe on the recent spectacular policy at Drury Lane: "That New Stage, whose extent and powers have been so vauntingly advertised under the classic management of Mr. Kemble in the edifying exhibition of Pantomimes, Processions, Pageants, Triumphal Cars, Milk-white Horses, and Elephants."[2] However, poor Kemble was not altogether to blame for the troubles that attended *The Iron Chest.* Colman himself was ill just before the production, while the composer, Stephen Storace, was in what proved to be a dying state, for he expired four days after the first night. This is one of the sad stories associated with Drury Lane, and, although the old theatre he knew is gone, Storace's ghost must be one of those who haunt famous Drury, for his sudden end was entirely the result of his labours, despite serious illness, for *The Iron Chest.* Kelly thus tells the pathetic tale of his friend's last days: "On the first rehearsal, although labouring under a severe attack of gout and fever, after having been confined to his bed for many days, he insisted upon being wrapped up in blankets, and carried in a sedan-chair to the cold stage of the playhouse. The entreaties and prayers of his family were of no avail: go he would. He went, and remained there to the end of the rehearsal. The agony I suffered during the time is beyond my power of description. He went home to his bed, whence he never rose again. The last twelve bars of music he ever wrote were the subject of the song (and a beautiful subject it is), 'When the Robber his Victim has Noted,' which I sang in the character of Captain Armstrong. I called upon him the night of the day in which he had been at the rehearsal; he sent for me to his bedside, and, pressing my hand, said: 'My dear Mick, I have tried to finish your song, but find myself unable to accomplish it. I must be ill indeed when I can't write for you, who have given so much energy to my compositions. I leave you the subject of your song, and beg you will finish it yourself; no one can do it better; and my last request is that you will let no one else meddle with it.' Saying these words, he turned on his side, and fell into a slumber; and never, never did I see him more. His memory will for ever live in the hearts of all who have heard his compositions; for the drafts of true genius, though they may not be honoured so soon as they come due, are sure to be paid with compound interest in the end. He died March 16th, in the thirty-third year of his age. It is a singular coincidence that three such great musical geniuses as Purcell, Mozart, and Storace were nearly of the same age when Fate ordained them to their early graves."

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[1] See *ante*, p. 136.

[2] See *ante*, pp. 204–205.

Stephen Storace died in Percy Street, Tottenham Court Road, and he was buried in the old parish church of Marylebone, in High Street, Marylebone, quite close to where had been the entrance to those famous Marylebone Gardens that thirty-five years earlier had been under the management of his father and grandfather, Trusler, and where his aunt and his mother as Miss Trusler had made those delicious fruit-tarts with "the finest Epping Butter." On the west wall of the little church, under the gallery, is Storace's memorial stone, above which a hand holds a lyre. The inscription was written by his friend, Prince Hoare:

"In Memory of a Life devoted to the Study of Musical Science and shorten'd by Unremitted Application and Anxiety in the Attainment of its Object:

"This Marble is inscribed with the name of Stephen Storace, whose professional talents commanded public applause, whose private virtues ensured domestic Affection:

"He died March 16th, 1796, aged 34,[1] and is interred under this Church.

Silent his lyre, or wak'd to Heavenly Strains,
Clos'd his short scene of chequer'd joys and pains,
Beloved and grateful as the notes he sung,
His name still trembles on affection's tongue,
Still in our bosoms holds its wonted part,
And strikes the Chords which vibrate to the heart.
P. H.

"This marble is put up by a tender mother and an affectionate sister."

So, early set one of the melodic stars which had risen brightly in Italy: scarcely sixteen years had elapsed since that fateful meeting on the quay at Leghorn, when the Storaces and Kelly first envisaged the panorama of their golden future. Realisations of all their dreams were meted to them, but for the Storaces, as so often in human experience, the glory faded in possession, Anna Storace only lived to the age of fifty, and her last years were sad. She had formed a connection with John Braham[2] (1774–1856), the celebrated tenor, when he was a young man. The two toured and sang together on the Continent with great success, 1797–1801, and from 1805 they were associated at Drury Lane until Storace retired three years later. She made her farewell on May 30th, 1808, in *The Cabinet* and *Love Laughs at Locksmiths*. Colman had written a valedictory address, which she sang with much pathos and effect, "and quitted public life esteemed and regretted by all." Anna Storace had a son by Braham, born about 1796, and later the boy became a priest; she was eight years older than Braham, and with advancing years she grew very stout and coarse in appearance. As so often happens in such relationships, the man desired to end it, and settle down after marrying another woman. This was what Braham did when he separated from Storace in 1816, and her grief and mortification are said to have hastened the great singer's death. She retired to Herne Hill Cottage, Dulwich. On the day before she died (August 24th, 1817) she dined with Kelly at his house, No. 13, Great Russell Street, Covent Garden, when Signor Ambrogetti, the comic singer, and Savory, the chymist of Bond Street, were also present. In the course of the evening, "she was all at once taken with a shivering fit, and appeared very ill. When her carriage came to take her home, Mr. Savory requested her to be bled, and to send for Dr. Hooper. On the following day, Dr. Hooper went to her country-house at Herne Hill, and advised her by all means to be bled, but she would not consent because it was Friday ; thus, in fact, she sacrificed herself to superstition. It was confidently asserted that had she lost blood her life might have been saved." Thus it chanced that Kelly was one of the last persons to speak with both Stephen and Anna Storace, his early and best friends, before their sudden ends. The sister was buried at St. Mary's Church, Lambeth.

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[1] Storace was thirty-three when he died.

[2] Braham's real name was Abraham, and he was the son of German-Jewish parents who had settled in London. He made his first professional appearance at the age of thirteen as Master Abraham at Goodman's Field Theatre, in Whitechapel, where Garrick had made his first London début forty-six years earlier, in 1741.

Anna Storace had saved a good deal of money, about £50,000, which she bequeathed to her cousin, Miss Trusler, and apparently left nothing to her son by Braham. Stephen Storace was not nearly so provident. Farington says he left about £3,000. He had married Mary, daughter of John Hall (1739–97), the excellent line-engraver. John Hall died the year following the death of his son-in-law, and John Thomas Smith, in *Nollekens and His Times*, notes that Hall "never enjoyed his health from suffering so much for the loss of his son-in-law Storace." There was evidently need to provide some aid for Storace's wife and child, for a fortnight after his death the opera of *Mahmoud*, written by Prince Hoare, with music by Stephen Storace, was produced at Drury Lane for their benefit, an occasion which marked also the first appearance of John Braham at that theatre. Kelly relates :

"The whole of the profits arising from the opera were generously given by the author to Storace's widow and orphan. All the performers took the greatest pains to do justice to the posthumous work of the composer. Kemble's acting, as the hero of the piece, was a masterly performance. The opera had a run of many nights, and was much applauded ; it had the powerful support of Mr. Braham, who made his first appearance in it at Drury Lane, and sang a hunting cavatina in a masterly style, as well as a beautiful ballad, 'From Shades of Night,' with great truth of expression and lovely simplicity. Mr. Braham was received with the greatest applause, and deservedly so, for there is no such singer, when he pleases, for he is decidedly the greatest vocalist of his day."

At the first performance of *Mahmoud* a prologue, written by Prince Hoare only a few hours previously, was spoken. It commenced:

When vain is every anxious hope to save,
And genius sinks to an untimely grave,
The wakened feelings of a generous mind,
A momentary void consent to find. . . .
To-night we mourn a lov'd composer lost,
By all lamented, but by us the most.
Deprived, alas! of that inspiring beam,
That touch'd the tuneful lyre with fleeting gleam. . . .

On April 7th, 1796, Madame Banti had her benefit at the Opera House in Gluck's opera of *Alceste*, and she asked for Sheridan's permission for Kelly to sing the principal male part, in which he had won renown at Vienna under the coaching of the composer. The opera was performed for twenty nights in London to crowded houses: "Madame Banti's performance of Alceste was a *chef d'œuvre*, her acting sublime, her singing charming."

On May 6th, 1796, a fine old actor, Robert Bensley (1738–1817) retired from the stage, an event marked by a memorable performance of *The Grecian Daughter*, when Mrs. Siddons appeared to his Evander as Euphrasia. Bensley had been a soldier in his early days, and in his retirement, according to Kelly, he returned to the army as a barrack-master at Knightsbridge, until a near relation, Sir William Bensley, Bart., left him a large fortune, whereupon the ex-actor went to live at Stanmore for the residue of his life. Bensley had been an excellent Prospero, Iago, and Malvolio. Kelly says "he had a manner of rolling his eyes when speaking; and a habit, whenever he entered the green-room, of stirring the fire with great ceremony, *secundum artem*, in which habit I was in the habit of imitating him; he caught me once in the very act, and joined heartily in the laugh against himself. I remember there was a tragedy brought out at Drury Lane, written by a hatter, which was completely condemned ; towards the end of the play Palmer and Bensley had, in their characters, to die upon the stage ; a torrent of hisses accompanied their latter moments, and the curtain fell in the midst of the tumult. When the play was over, Palmer and Bensley came in to the green-room ; and Palmer said to Bensley, ' You see, Bensley, the audience have settled the Hatters.' ' So I perceive, and they did not spare the dyers,' replied Bensley."

Bensley was extremely sensitive, and much disliked being imitated. He was a scholarly, cultured man, and the glare in his eye, his peculiar gait and tone of voice, suggest that his mannerisms were akin to those of Irving in a later generation. Bensley's most successful part was Eustace de St. Pierre in *The Siege of Calais*, by Colman. Dr. Doran told an amusing story in this connection :

" The ex-lieutenant Bensley may be said to have made his first appearance in the drama in Richmond Park, where he unconsciously had the park-keeper for his admiring audience. The part was Pierre, for some instructions in which he was indebted to Colman, and which he used to rehearse in the Park at early morn, with the six tubs of trees, planted on Queen Caroline's Mount, for scene and *senate*. The park-keeper, who had often seen him wending that way full of thought, once lay hidden near, and watched his proceedings. Bensley was rehearsing the scene before his judges, and the listener must have been sorely puzzled as he heard allusions made to chains and conquests, and the centre tub addressed as a ' great duke,' who ' shrunk, trembling in his palace,' and references to the Duchess Adriatic in terms that must have perplexed his judgment. He simply set down the poor gentleman as mad, and left him to teach the loose Venetians ' the task of honour, and the way to greatness,' without further molestation."

Charles Lamb devotes a great part of his essay *On Some of the Old Actors* to Bensley, to whom he apportioned high praise in retrospection :

" Of all the actors who flourished in my time . . . Bensley had most of the swell of soul, was greatest in the delivery of heroic conceptions, the emotions consequent upon the presentment of a great idea to the fancy. He had the true poetical enthusiasm

—the rarest faculty among players. . . . His voice had the dissonance, and at times the inspiriting effect, of the trumpet. His gait was uncouth and stiff, but no way embarrassed by affectation."

In the summer of 1796, Kelly went on a visit to Dover Castle to his friend Colonel North, who was Deputy-Governor of the Castle. The Honourable Francis North (1761–1817), a son of the second Earl of Guilford, and who himself succeeded his brother, the third Earl, as fourth Earl in 1802, had been in the army for seventeen years, and was the author of a drama entitled *The Kentish Baron*, produced in 1791. Kelly had an adventure at Dover:

" One very fine morning I was seated at a little distance from the Castle looking at the opposite shore, and took my pencil and a little music-book (which I always carried about me to put down any musical idea that might strike me) from my pocket: a subject I thought pretty came across me, and I was writing it in the book when one of the soldiers belonging to the Castle came behind me, and without the smallest ceremony laid hold of me, saying in a tremendous Tipperary brogue, ' Ah, my tight fellow, have I caught you in the fact? Och, Mr. Mounsieur, how got you here, sir?' I began to laugh, but the Tipperary man of war said, ' By the powers! I'll teach you to laugh out of t'other side of your mouth, my fine fellow, in a minute or two.' I asked what my offence was. ' What,' said he, ' have I not caught you taking views of the fortifications? You seem mighty fond of looking at it, but, please the pigs, you don't get out of the black hole in it in a little time.' And with all his might he proceeded to surround me and drag me to the donjon keep, accompanying each lusty pull with a volley of abuse. Luckily for me, before we got a great way on the road to durance vile we met Colonel North, who, much to my delight, released me from the gripe of Old Tipperary and his military ardour. He laughed heartily at my adventure, but told me that the soldier had done no more than his duty. ' And you ought to have known *that*, Kelly,' said the Colonel. 'Making *notes* is a sure way of getting into a *scrape*; and you should have bargained for the *bars* before you began.'

" The next day we went to his brother's, the Earl of Guilford's[1] seat at Waldershare, where we remained two days and then returned to London. I then accompanied Mrs. Crouch to Cheltenham, where she had been ordered to drink the waters. Our excellent friend the Colonel promised to meet us there, and, punctual to his word, was there before us. We agreed, during our stay at this delightful place, to take a house together, and we were fortunate enough to get a beautiful cottage in the midst of corn fields, then called Wyatt's Cottage ; there indeed I enjoyed his delightful society ; for in repartee and ready wit who was his equal ? The Colonel was stinted by his medical adviser while drinking the Cheltenham waters not to exceed one pint of wine a day ; he promised not to exceed his pint, nor did he ; but it was a Scotch pint—six of claret or port, which was his daily portion ; white wine at dinner, he said, went for nothing, though he flirted with the best part of a bottle of old Madeira every day.

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[1] George, third Earl of Guilford (1757–1802). He was Under-Secretary in his father's Ministry, 1783.

" Here I had the pleasure of meeting an old friend of my father's, my eccentric countryman, the Earl of Howth,[1] whose skill in coachmanship was so celebrated. The very apex of his ambition, the pride of his heart, was not only to be thought a coachman-like Lord, but actually a coachman ; his wig, his coat, every part of his dress, was a coachman's ; and in his conversation he imitated the slang of the fraternity: but his actions and manner of thinking were those of a perfect gentleman ; he was upright, good-natured, and honourable. He rarely visited his beautiful place near Dublin. He resided in the winter chiefly at Bath ; and in the summer at Cheltenham, with his daughters, the Ladies St. Lawrence, and a particular friend of theirs, a Miss George, a lady of polished manners and education, respected by all who had the good fortune to be acquainted with her. I went one morning into a poulterer's shop and found the Noble Earl buying some poultry. I ordered the poulterer to send me home a fine goose, wished his lordship good morning, and was walking homeward at a quick pace when I heard my name hallooed out; and, turning round to see who was calling me, I saw his lordship in the middle of the High Street; his lordship shouting out, with a determined Irish accent, 'Kelly! Kelly! I say, Kelly! Corn your goose! corn your goose! I tell you now do, Kelly, corn him! Keep him in salt four days, and then boil him with a wisp of white cabbage; and by the Powers he'll be mighty fine eating.' I took his lordship's advice, and found it a delicious dish.

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[1] This was the second Earl of Howth (1751–1822), who, however, at this date was Viscount St. Lawrence, as he did not succeed his father as Earl of Howth until 1801. He was a widower with four daughters : the eldest, Lady Harriett, married in 1801 Arthur French St. George, who possibly was a brother of the Miss George mentioned by Kelly. The title became extinct on the death of his grandson, the fourth earl. At Howth Castle, near Dublin, was a curious picture illustrating a remarkable incident in the family history—the abduction of young Lord Howth by Grace O'Malley in 1575. Apparently desiring a free meal at the Castle, on finding the gates closed while the family was at dinner, she abducted the son and heir. The child was returned on the promise being given to Grace O'Malley (who was a female buccaneer) that the gates of Howth Castle should for all the future be open at meal-times for the benefit of wayfarers ; if the undertaking ever failed to be carried out, the male line of the St. Lawrences would die out. The custom was allowed to lapse in the time of Kelly's friend, who preferred to live in Bath and Cheltenham rather than in his ancestral seat in Ireland, and, as stated, the male line was ended after two more generations.

"I passed some pleasant weeks at Cheltenham; and among other agreeable recollections it is not the least to think that I there formed an acquaintance with my excellent friend, Mr. Savory, now a celebrated chymist in Bond Street, who at that time was under Mr. Cotter, the principal apothecary and chymist at Cheltenham. I also had the advantage of originating a friendship with that great and worthy man and friend to the human race, Doctor Jenner, who often did me the honour to take his dinner with me: he wrote a very excellent Bacchanalian song for which I composed the music."

Edward Jenner (1749-1823), a native of Berkeley, in Gloucestershire, after sixteen years of experiment and study of the diseases of smallpox and cowpox, had just at this date, when Kelly met him, successfully demonstrated the use of vaccination, for it was on May 14th, 1796 (a date still, I believe, commemorated by an annual festival in Berlin), that a boy of eight was vaccinated, and then inoculated with smallpox on July the 1st, without any result in the way of signs of the major disease. Scientific honours were showered upon Jenner, and some years later sums of money to the amount of £30,000 were voted to him by the House of Commons. When Kelly was about to leave Cheltenham, he was lamenting to Dr. Jenner how much he and Mrs. Crouch would miss the efficacious Spa waters of Cheltenham, from which they had both derived so much benefit. Whereupon the Doctor, under an injunction of secrecy said to him: "The Cheltenham salts, which you can procure or

Mr. Patheyrus, chymist, in Bond Street, and of him alone, are to the full as efficacious, and conducive to health, as the water from the well. This is the candid opinion I give you. I should not wish to promulgate it, as it might prejudice many industrious people by keeping company from the Spa, which I should be sorry to be the case."

Cheltenham is the most delightful of towns, but its famous chalybeate waters are not very nice to the taste, and they "astonished the stomach" of Mr. Jorrocks. Still, there is no reason to believe that Dr. Jenner was in agreement with the libellous suggestions of the epitaph written, no doubt, by a bard of Bath :

Here lie I and my two daughters,
Died of drinking the Cheltenham Waters ;
If we had stuck to Epsom Salts,
We shouldn't be lying in these here vaults.

At Cheltenham, Kelly was introduced by Colonel North to Thomas Coutts, the banker, who, as already related,[1] was to become the protector and later the husband of Harriot Mellon, for, as Kelly delicately puts it when mentioning Coutts, "I had the pleasure for many years to be kindly remembered and favoured by the notice and attentions of one who was ever a liberal patron of the arts and sciences, and *of those who professed them.*" It was at Cheltenham, some ten years later, that Coutts first came to an understanding with Harriot Mellon. Her step-father, Thomas Entwisle, was the unsatisfactory post-master of that town. In the same year, 1796, that Kelly became known to Thomas Coutts, his friend, the third Earl of Guilford, had married the wealthy banker's eldest daughter, Susan, on February 28th, and it was at Cheltenham that a curious accident happened to Lord Guilford during his courtship. He fell from his horse when in the act of presenting a basket of fruit to Miss Coutts, and "by this accident it was supposed the spine of his back was affected, and from this fatal source were derived all the bodily sufferings under which he languished for several years, and that baffled all the skill of the ablest physicians." He died six years later, in 1802.

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[1] See *ante*, pp. 224–225.

As previously related, the little theatre in Cheltenham, situated then in Pittville Street (the later theatre in Cambray Mead was built in 1802), was under the management of the amusing Watson, who had been Kemble's companion in their early days of struggle and privation.[1] Watson wished Mrs. Crouch and Kelly to appear at his theatre, but, as they were in Cheltenham for the cure, they declined his liberal offer of half the receipts every night, and a clear benefit for each. However, Lord Howth called one day, and said, " My dear Kelly, everybody is wishing you would perform here for a few nights. You will get a good deal of money; and, in the name of fortune, why not pick up your crumbs. Sure, it will be only just an amusement to you; the house will always be full, and I will let the boxes for you myself."

Such peeraged persuasion could not be refused and the players agreed with Watson to appear for a week. The noble Earl was as good as his word; on the morning before the first performance he came to the Spa-room, where all the fashionable company was assembled to drink the waters under the guidance of Mrs. Forty. Lord Howth, with the box-order book in his hand, went round saying, " Now, my lady, you will have the stage-box; as for the Countess, she can only have a second or third row one "—and so on. As Kelly said, " Nothing could exceed the warmth of his lordship's heart, although he was so eccentric; he left his coach-box to let boxes for me." The noble box-office keeper was entirely successful, and the theatre overflowed each evening.

A very gratifying incident now occurred to Kelly, for he was summoned to the Royal Pavilion at Brighton to lay before the Prince of Wales, for his approbation, the plan of alterations proposed for the Opera House. He was introduced into the Presence by Colonel McMahon, the Prince's private secretary, and as ever he was dazzled by the Royal Charms of the most picturesque King of the House of Hanover:

" I found, as I always had the good fortune to do, His Royal Highness everything gracious, kind, and condescending; a Prince who needs but to be known to be beloved and respected for the rich variety of his talents, attainments, and knowledge, which seems to belong to every age and to every country."

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[1] See *ante*, pp. 134–135.

No doubt it was a criterion of his own merits to know that he had shared with the Prince the possession of the same lovely woman ; and luckily he was never to read the later attacks on his Royal Idol from the disrespectful and bitter pens of Greville, Thackeray, and Bradlaugh. So, exhilarated by the rarefied air of the Pavilion, he set forth in happy mood to rejoin Mrs. Crouch at Cheltenham :

" After a week's delightful sojourn at Brighton I returned to London ; and the following day took my seat upon the Cheltenham coach to join Mrs. Crouch, who was waiting at Cheltenham till I returned to accompany her to London. I was full of life and spirits, and found some pleasant companions on the roof of the carriage, and laugh, fun, and hoaxing were the order of the day ; for although the latter word is of more modern origin, still the meaning was the same and the joke as winning. About twelve miles from Cheltenham, near Northleach, a man (a native of the latter place) on the coach-box said, that the two men walking before us up the hill were the gaoler of Northleach and a man in his custody for debt. When we overtook them the coach was moving at a very slow pace, and I could not resist the allurement of a quotation ; a trick I was ever prone to indulge in, when it came in my way. Hallooing out aloud, and imitating and my face looking like old Macklin's in *The Merchant of Venice*, I quoted Shylock's speech to the astonished Northleach prison-keeper :

'*I do wonder,*
Thou naughty gaoler, that thou art so fond
To come abroad with him, at his request.'

' And what is that to you ? ' quoth the gaoler (with a face as red as a turkey-cock). ' What business is it of yours to ask me what I do ? If I had you down here I'd break every bone in your body.' I should have been sorry to be within his reach, for the varlet was tall and had a *striking* appearance ; however, the coachman relieved me from his threats by quickening his pace, laughing as well as the passengers, while the infuriated gaoler was giving me a volley of abuse: however, to say truth, I deserved it for my impudence."

Later this summer, Kelly went to Plymouth, where he saw the French prisoners of war confined in Mill Prison. They were very gay and happy, and enjoyed themselves with all kinds of games and pursuits. They made toys of all descriptions, particularly the model ships (now so valuable) for sale to visitors. Kelly bought from a French lieutenant one of these little ships, completely rigged, which he had admirably executed. Another of the prisoners had a large bench in front of the place where he was confined, and on this were the articles he had for sale. For tout he had beside him an old man, who could speak a little English, and kept bawling out to the passers-by: "Come here, *Monsieur le capitaine*, look here at my pretty things! *Monsieur le capitaine*, come buy de pretty things for Madame!"

Kelly asked the price of a handsome writing-desk, and was told four guineas. He said it was too much, and offered one. The maker (who was locked up) told his salesman to insist upon four guineas, adding, "I am sure you can get it; *monsieur le capitaine* there looks very like a simpleton." This was said in French, of course, the speaker not thinking his customer would understand, and he was considerably taken aback when the simpleton said in French that, fool as he was, he could purchase just such a writing-desk for a *louis d'or* in the Palais Royal and elsewhere in Paris. The dishonest one made a low bow, and smilingly replied, "*Ma foi, monsieur, vous avez de l'esprit—et pour ça*—for *that* you shall have the desk for one guinea." He received that amount, with a few complimentary observations upon his honesty and good manners.

Kelly very nearly found himself a prisoner in Mill Prison also, for one day, when strolling about before dinner, he found a gate open, and walked into a large yard. Seeing a man there, he asked him what place he was in? "What!" said the man, "don't you know?" Kelly replied that he did not, but, having seen the gate open, he had just walked in. "Then," said the man, "take my advice, and *walk out as fast as you can*; for if you are found examining the Dockyard in war time without permission, you will forthwith be lodged in the Mill Prison, whence you will not find it a very easy thing to get away."

Kelly had another adventure in relation to Plymouth Dockyard, which he must tell in his own way :

" I was very often at Mount Edgecumbe, where at that time the Somerset Militia were encamped. I had an invitation from the late Lord Cork to dine with him at the mess, which I accepted. There dined at the mess that day a young gentleman, a lieutenant in the Navy, who drank a good deal of wine, and subsequently accompanied me on my return to Dock in the public passage-boat. In the boat were some workmen of the Dockyard, all of whom had an inveterate aversion to and from the officers of the Navy, so much so, that desperate quarrels frequently occurred between them. My companion was excessively noisy and troublesome, abusing the people of the Dock in the grossest and most unqualified terms. I was doing all in my power to persuade him to 'moderate the rancour of his tongue,' but in vain ; he was half seas over, and became more and more violent in his vituperation of the Dockites. When we got on shore, and were walking up the hill, some half dozen of our hard-fisted nautical companions fell upon us. I was pummelled about like a shuttlecock, knocked down, and left senseless on the ground ; while my companion, who was the sole occasion of my being so cruelly mauled, apprehensive, I conclude, of the anger of some strict disciplinarian in command, made all sail from the scene of action, and left me at the mercy of the cowardly ruffians ; for I was fool enough to stand my ground as long as I was able—the fruits of which vain resistance were that I was carried to my hotel senseless, and confined to my bed for six weeks, attended by two medical men."

This episode, which reads like a page from one of Captain Marryat's novels, was a serious matter for Kelly in other ways, for he had to relinquish engagements in Liverpool, Manchester, Dublin, and Birmingham, with a resulting financial loss of £500, so he had good reason to remember Plymouth Dock. The mishap, however, did not prevent him from revisiting Plymouth again three years later, and appearing at the Dock Theatre. One evening, when playing in *No Song, No Supper*, Mrs. Crouch, as Margaretta, sang a ballad, composed by Dr. Arnold, entitled " The Poor Little Gipsey." While she was singing the line, " Spare the poor little gipsey a halfpenny," a jolly sailor shouted from the pit, " That I will, my darling," and threw a shilling on the stage, amid a roar of laughter from the audience. On their way to Plymouth, Kelly and Mrs. Crouch stayed for a few days at The Pyramid, Bath, with his old singing-master, Rauzzini, who had advised Kelly to go to Italy as a boy. His guests also included Madame Mara and Signora Storace, so each evening there was delightful music, Rauzzini himself taking part in the singing, though he had now lost the soprano notes of his voice and sang lower alto. At Plymouth, Kelly came across a theatrical manager named Jefferson, who had acted with Garrick, whom he much resembled in appearance. In his earlier days he had been manager of a wandering party of barn-stormers, and he told Kelly an amusing story of a French dancer, named La Croix, who desired to join his company at Penzance. He called upon Jefferson to offer his services, and said he had no doubt he would draw crowded houses by the excellence of his performance, for Monsieur La Croix, in his own opinion, was Le Dieu de la Danse. He was accordingly engaged on the usual terms—namely, that all the company should equally share the profits. He made his appearance in a fine *pas seul*; but, unluckily, in one of his most graceful pirouettes a very critical part of his scanty drapery, either from its age or thin texture, or from the wonderful exertions of the dancer, suddenly rent in a most revealing manner. Shouts of laughter and applause followed, which Monsieur La Croix imagined were given for his Terpsichorean agility, nor was his supposition at all unjustified, for the higher he bounded, the more he was applauded. At last someone behind the scenes called him off the stage, and he was so shocked at his indelicate mishap, that he could never be induced to appear again. In the sequel, when he came to receive his share of the receipts, the recompense of his exertions and exposure, the salvo for his shame amounted only to a few bits of candle-ends, which naturally he would not accept. He said he was a French artiste, and not a Russian, and therefore could not be expected to live on candles,[1] and that Monsieur Jeff (as he called the manager) had imposed upon him with false pretences. The poor fellow made his way to Totnes, where he obtained some pupils: but never would he hear mention of Mr. Jeff and his tallow finance.

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[1] The modern Russian Ballet would hardly subscribe to this dietary as all sufficient for their gustatory needs.

In January, 1797, was produced at Drury Lane *The Honey Moon*, an opera by William Linley, Mrs. Sheridan's brother; but owing to a cabal against it, according to Kelly, it did not meet with success, and was replaced by another musical entertainment, also composed by Linley, *The Pavilion*, in which Kelly played the principal part. This, too, was unsuccessful and soon taken off, and on February 9th it was followed by *A Friend in Need*, written by Prince Hoare, the music by Kelly. This was his first appearance in England as a composer, and he says the piece "met with universal approbation." He goes on to note the retirement from the stage of Miss Elizabeth Farren, at the age of thirty-eight, to marry the Earl of Derby: "The theatre, on the occasion, was crowded to the ceiling, and the applauses she received were as warm as they were deserved. Her demeanour in the theatre was all affability and good-nature; and in every action she was ever kind and lady-like. Lady Teazle, and other characters of high life, she pourtrayed with all the vivid colouring of truth; indeed, she had the advantage, like her great predecessor, Mrs. Abington, of associating with the first society and the greatest wits of the age."

Miss Farren was the daughter of a Cork surgeon who had turned strolling actor, so it was only by her own merits and charms that she came to associate with that high and witty society. Lord Derby was married to a daughter of the Duke of Hamilton when he first came under the spell of Miss Farren, and many years passed before they could go to church. At last, the first Lady Derby died, in 1797, on March 17th, and on May 1st the not disconsolate widower married Miss Farren. (In later years, the Earl of Cardigan married Miss de Horsey two months after the death of his wife.) Like everyone else's, Miss Farren's salary was in arrears at Drury Lane, and, after he married her, Lord Derby thought he might make an effort to recover some of the debt from Sheridan. So he called at the theatre one day, and said he would not leave the green-room until he received the money, whereupon Sheridan piously observed: "My dear Lord, this is too bad. You have taken from us the brightest star in our little world, and now you quarrel with us for a little dust which she has left behind her."

In 1797 Kelly gives an amusing account of a visit he paid to Richard Cumberland, the dramatist, who was then spending his last years at Tunbridge Wells in somewhat reduced circumstances. Richard Cumberland (1732–1811) had originally been intended for the Church, and was a Fellow of Trinity, Cambridge, in the Lodge of which college he had been born. His maternal grandfather, the famous Richard Bentley, was Master of Trinity, 1700–42, while his father was Bishop of Clonfert, and later of Kilmore. Richard Cumberland became Secretary to the Board of Trade, and in 1780 he was sent on a secret mission to the Court of Madrid, which is said to have caused the loss of £4,500 of his own money in expenses. It was then that he took seriously to play-writing as a means of living, though the best of his plays, *The West Indian*, dated from 1771. *The Jew* and *The Wheel of Fortune* (in which Kemble made a success) were also very popular. Kelly relates:

"It was in this year that Mr. Cumberland, the author, promised my friend Jack Bannister[1] to write a comedy for his benefit, which was to be interspersed with songs for Mrs. Jordan, which he wished me to compose. He was good enough to give Bannister and myself an invitation to spend a few days with him at his house at Tunbridge Wells, in order that he might read his comedy to us; and, as we were both interested in its success, we accepted his invitation; but, fearing that we might not find our residence with him quite so pleasant as we wished, we agreed, previous to leaving town, that Mrs. Crouch should write me a letter, stating that Mr. Taylor requested me to return to London immediately about some Opera concerns, by which measure we could take our departure without giving offence to our host if we did not like our quarters, or to remain with him if we did. Jack Bannister rode down on horse-back, and I mounted the top of the Tunbridge coach. Seated on the roof were two very pretty girls and two livery servants; this party I soon discovered were on the establishment of the Duchess of Leinster, following Her Grace to Tunbridge Wells, whither she had gone the day before. While ascending Morant's Court Hill we overtook Bannister on horse-back, who called out to me, 'What, Michael! who would have expected to see you on the top of the stage? I hope you have brought your curling-irons with you; I shall want my hair dressed before dinner; come to me to the Sussex Hotel. Tunbridge Wells is very full, and I dare say you will get plenty of custom, both as a shaver and dresser.' At the conclusion of this harangue, he bade me good-day, put spurs to his horse, and rode away.

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[1] John Bannister (1760–1836) was a good stock actor. He created the part of Don Whiskerandos in *The Critic* in 1779, and was also excellent as Joseph Surface, Bob Acres, George Barnwell, and Tony Lumpkin. Acting Manager of Drury Lane, 1802–3, Jack Bannister was very popular as an actor with the lower orders, and the story was told that on one occasion when he was out on a lonely road he was stopped by two foot-pads. The thieves were about to rob him, when they recognised their favourite. They begged his pardon, wished him good-night, and passed on to find other plunder elsewhere.

"I resolved to follow up the joke; and, when the coach stopped at Seven Oaks, I sat down to dinner (my luncheon) with the servants in the room allotted to outside passengers. We grew quite familiar; the lady's-maid and the two footmen promised me their protection, and declared that they would do everything in their power to get me custom; although they could not invite me to call and see them at the Duchess's house, because nothing but the most rigid stinginess was practised there. 'I suppose,' said I, 'you can give one a glass of ale now and then?' 'Ale,' said one of the footmen; 'bless your heart, we never have ale, never see such a thing; nothing but small beer, I assure you.' Until we arrived at our journey's end, the abigails and knights of the shoulder-knot kept entertaining me with anecdotes of the family, which were not very flattering I confess, but which I believe to have been false, having had for many years the pleasure of knowing Her Grace the Duchess and Mr. Ogilvie, her husband.[1] On our parting where the coach set us down, we all vowed eternal friendship, and I got to Mr. Cumberland's in time for dinner.

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[1] The Duchess of Leinster (daughter of the second Duke of Richmond, and consequently a great-granddaughter of King Charles II and Louise de Keroualle, Duchess of Portsmouth) was the widow of the first Duke, who died in 1773, when she married William Ogilvie, who had been tutor to her sons, including the famous Lord Edward FitzGerald, who perished the year following the period Kelly describes. Mr. Ogilvie, though a just and good man, had all the frugality of his race, and treated his pupils, and his wife's household, to a Spartan regime, particularly in food, as he wished to save money to provide for the two daughters who were born of his marriage with the Duchess. Her sprightly sister, Lady Sarah Lennox, writes in 1779: "My sister Leinster and Mr. Ogilvie are just arrived from Paris in London. . . . I *have* seen him, and think him a very good sort of man, most sincerely attached to her . . . she is old enough to know her own mind . . . but she certainly did not marry him *pour l'amour de ses beaux yeux*, for he is very ugly and has a disagreeable manner . . . his mind was to love her to adoration, and that's very captivating."

"The party consisted of myself, Bannister, Mrs. Cumberland, an agreeable, well-informed old lady, and our host, who, by-the-by, during dinner called his wife 'mamma.' We passed a pleasant evening enough, but wine was scarce; however, what we had was excellent, and what was wanting in beverage was amply supplied in converse sweet, and the delights of hearing the reading of a five-act comedy. Five acts of a play, read by its author after tea, are at any time opiates of the most determined nature, even if one has risen late and moved little; but with such a predisposition to somnolency as I found the drive, the dust, the sun, the air, the dinner, and a little sensible conversation, had induced, what was to be expected? Long before the end of the second act I was fast as a church, a slight tendency to snoring rendered this misfortune more appalling than it otherwise would have been; and the numberless kicks which I received under the table from Bannister served only to vary, by fits and starts, the melody with which nature chose to accompany my slumbers. When it is recollected that our host and reader had served Sheridan as a model for Sir Fretful, it may be supposed that he was somewhat irritated by my inexcusable surrender of myself; but no; he closed his proceedings and his manuscript at the end of the second act, and we adjourned to a rational supper upon a cold mutton-bone, and dissipated in two tumblers of weak red wine and water.

"When the repast ended the bard conducted us to our bed-rooms: the apartment in which I was to sleep was his study; he paid me the compliment to say he had a little tent-bed put up there which he always appropriated to his favourite guest. 'The bookcase at the side,' he added, 'was filled with his own writings.' I bowed and said, 'I dare say, sir, I shall sleep very soundly.' 'Ah! very good,' said he; 'I understand you; a hit, sir, a palpable hit. You mean being so close to my writings, they will act as a soporific. You are a good soul, Mr. Kelly, but a very drowsy one. God bless you, you are a kind creature to come into the country to listen to my nonsense. *Buonas noches!* as we say in Spain, good night! I hope it will be fine weather for you to walk about in the morning; for I think, with Lord

Falkland, who said he pitied unlearned gentlemen on a rainy day. Umph, good night, God bless you, you are so kind.' I could plainly perceive that the old gentleman was not over-pleased, but I really had no intention of giving him offence. He was allowed, however, to be one of the most sensitive of men when his own writings were spoken of; and, moreover, reckoned envious in the highest degree.

"He had an inveterate dislike to Mr. Sheridan, and would not allow him the praise of a good dramatic writer; which, considering the ridicule Sheridan had heaped upon him in *The Critic*, is not so surprising.[1] That piece was wormwood to him: he was also very sore at what Sheridan had said of him before he drew his portrait in that character. This anecdote Mr. Sheridan told me. When *The School for Scandal* came out, Cumberland's children prevailed upon their father to take them to see it; they had the stage-box; their father was seated behind them; and, as the story was told by a gentleman, a friend of Sheridan's, who was close by, every time the children laughed at what was going on on the stage he pinched them and said, 'What are you laughing at, my dear little folks? You should not laugh, my angels; there is nothing to laugh at.' And then, in an undertone, 'Keep still, you little dunces.' Sheridan, having been told of this, said, 'It was very ungrateful of Cumberland to have been displeased with his poor children for laughing at my comedy; for I went the other night to see his tragedy, and laughed at it from beginning to end.'

"But, with all the irritability which so frequently belongs to dramatists, Mr. Cumberland was a perfect gentleman in his manners and a good classical scholar. I was walking with him on the Pantiles one morning, and took the opportunity of telling him (which was the truth) that his dramatic works were in great request at Vienna; and that his *West Indian* and *Brothers*, particularly, were first-rate favourites; this pleased the old man so much that (I flattered myself) it made him forget my drowsy propensities.

"He took me up to the top of Mount Ephraim, where we met the Duchess of Leinster and a lady walking; she had just got out of her carriage, and the two identical footmen who had been on the stage-coach with me were walking behind her. She stopped to speak to Mr. Cumberland; and never shall I forget the countenance of the servants when Her Grace said, ‘ Mr. Kelly, I am glad to see you. Have you been long here ? ’ I replied, ‘ No, madam, only two days.’ ‘ Did you come down alone ? ’ said the Duchess. ‘ Not entirely,’ said I; ‘ I came down on the coach, and, I assure you, met with some very pleasant, chatty companions, who amused me very much by a variety of anecdotes about themselves and their masters and mistresses.’ While I was saying this I kept looking at my two sworn friends, the footmen, who seemed struck with wonder and surprise. ‘ Well,’ said the Duchess, ‘ I hope this place will agree with you.’ I said, ‘ I fear not, for I am extremely partial to malt liquor, and I am told that it is execrable here; and that in the very first houses one meets with nothing but bad small beer.’ I again looked at my friends, and I am sure they wished me at Jericho; for it was evident by their countenances that they were afraid I should betray their confidence, and they seemed quite relieved when they saw me make my bow and walk away.

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[1] The character of Sir Fretful Plagiary was too obviously based on Cumberland.

“ A letter arrived the next morning, as we had planned, which called me to London; we informed our host that we were obliged to quit his hospitable roof early the following day. ‘ My children,’ said he, ‘ I regret that you must leave your old bard, but business must be attended to, and, as this is the last day I am to have the pleasure of your company, when you return from your evening's rambles on the Pantiles, I will give you what I call a treat.’ After dinner, Bannister and myself went to the library. ‘ What,’ said I to Bannister, ‘ can be the treat Cumberland has promised us to-night ? I suppose he took notice of your saying at dinner that your favourite meal was supper, and he intends, as we are going away to-morrow, to give us some little delicacies.’ Bannister professed entire ignorance and some doubt; and on our return from our walk we found Cumberland in his parlour waiting for us. As I anticipated, the cloth was laid for supper, and in the middle of the table was a large dish with a cover on it. When we were seated, with appetites keen, and eyes fixed upon the mysterious dainty, our host, after some preparation, desired a servant to remove the cover, and on the dish lay another manuscript play. ‘ There, my boys,’ said he, 'there is the treat which I promised you; that, sirs, is my *Tiberius* in five acts; and after we have had our sandwiches and wine and water, I will read you every word of it. I am not vain, but I do think it by far the best play I ever wrote, and I think you'll say so.'[1]

"The treat itself was horrible; the Reading sauce was ill-suited to the light supper, and neither poppy nor Mandragora, nor even the play of the preceding evening, would have been half so bad as his *Tiberius*; but will the reader believe that it was no joke, but all in earnest, and that he actually fulfilled his horrid promise and read the three first acts? But seeing violent symptoms of our old complaint coming over us, he proposed that we should go to bed, and in the morning that he should treat us, before we started, by reading the fourth and fifth acts; but we saved him the trouble, for we were off before he was out of bed. Such are the perils and hair-breadth 'scapes which attend the guests of dramatists who live in the country. The comedy which he read on the first evening of our visit, and which was called *The Last of the Family*, was brought out at Drury Lane, as he had promised, for Bannister's benefit on May 8th, and was repeated four times with moderate success. It contained much elegant dialogue and correct sentiment, but the plot was too meagre and inartificial for effect. Bannister spoke a Prologue in the character of Sheva, in *The Jew*; and Mrs. Jordan an Epilogue, with a song, which were much applauded."

On June 14th, 1797, the companies of the patent theatres combined for a benefit, given at Covent Garden Theatre, in aid of the widows and orphans of the men who fell in action on February 14th off Cape St. Vincent during Jervis's great battle and defeat of the Spanish fleet. Mrs. Jordan played in *The Country Girl*; the Drury Lane company performed *No Song, No Supper*; and the whole *corps-de-ballet* from the Opera House gave the ballet of *Cupid and Psyche*; several of the Covent Garden players appeared, and the Epilogue was spoken by Mrs. Abington (1737–1815), who had not acted during the seven previous years. In early life she had been a flower-seller, a street singer, and domestic servant. When she reached the stage, some time elapsed before she achieved her great fame as Lady Townley. Mrs. Abington was sixty years old when she thus returned to the stage, for in October of this year, 1797, she also appeared as Beatrice to fill the gap caused by Miss Wallis's marriage and departure from the cast at Covent Garden. An imaginary Address was written alluding to the rumours of Mrs. Abington's age, but, needless to say, she did not deliver it:

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[1] Thomas Holcroft tells this story a year later in his diary, October 14th, 1798, where is also mentioned a letter from Cumberland saying that his *Tiberius* was "the most laboured, the oftenest revised, and the best written of all his works."

Yes, my loved Patrons, I'm here once more,
Though many kindly say that I'm four-score;
Perhaps you think so, and with wonder see
That I can curtsey, thus, with pliant knee;
That still without two crutches I am walking,
And, what's more strange, don't mumble in my talking.
Increase my years, and you increase my merit,
If I perform with some degree of spirit . . .

There was another charity performance at this date, also given at Covent Garden, in aid of the Lying-in Hospital at Bayswater, when the *corps-de-ballet* appeared, and Anna Storace, Braham, and Kelly acted in *The Duenna.*

In October, 1797, there was some trouble at Drury Lane, when a musical play entitled *The Chimney Corner*, translated from the French by Walsh Porter and composed by Kelly, was produced: "Unfortunately for the piece, Mr. Kelly gave up the character of Darcy, an officer, to Miss De Camp, who, though an excellent *Ariel*, made a slight little boy of the warrior, and looked his *page*, not *himself.*" As Mrs. Crouch would not, of course, act without Kelly, she too resigned her part, of Louisa, to Miss Leak. "The change was by no means favourable to *The Chimney Corner*, which, notwithstanding the fall of snow (very naturally represented through the windows of a hall), was not so *welcome* as might be expected."

It was in 1797 that Kelly became acquainted with that remarkable young man, Matthew Gregory Lewis (1775–1818), who the previous year, at the age of twenty-one, had won fame with his bizarre romance, *The Monk*, a work which combines the supernatural with frankly sensual amatory detail. He was educated at Westminster and Christ Church, Oxford, and entered the Diplomatic Service, and was for a time attaché to the British Embassy at The Hague, but his father being a wealthy man, owning much property in the West Indies, there was never much occasion for his son to work. The father died in 1812, and most of his great fortune passed to " Monk " Lewis. He was M.P. for Hindon, 1796–1802, and a popular figure in Society, numbering the Princess of Wales and the Duchess of York among his friends. On Walter Scott he had considerable literary influence in the mode of writing romantic ballads,[1] and in 1798, although he was four years senior, Scott was delighted to meet Lewis, for he told Allan Cunningham that he had never felt such elation as when " The Monk " invited him to dine, and he thus came face to face with a famous poet. And years later, after Lewis's death, Scott wrote of him : " He was a child, and a spoiled child, but a child of high imagination, and so he wasted himself on ghost stories and German romances. He had the finest ear for rhythm I ever met with—finer than Byron's."

Byron's opinion of Lewis is somewhat similar, and he, too, remarks on the boyishness of " The Monk," who was also small, slight in figure, and young in appearance even at the age of forty :

" Lewis was a pleasant companion, and would always have remained a boy in spirits and manners (unlike me !). He was fond of the society of younger men than himself. I remember Mrs. Hope once asking who was Lewis's male-love this season ! He possessed a very lively imagination, and a great turn for narrative, and had a world of ghost-stories, which he had better have confined himself to telling. His poetry is now almost forgotten.

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[1] *The Monk* and books which imitated it, such as *Zofloya*, by Charlotte Dacre, powerfully influenced the youth of Shelley, that mood of his which dallied with " death-demons, and skeletons dripping with the putrefaction of the grave, that may occasionally blast your straining eyeball," and found expression in his own early and imitative romances in the same vein, *Zastrozzi* (1810), and *St. Irvyne, or the Rosicrucian*, issued when Shelley was an undergraduate of Oxford, and which commences in the authentic style of " Monk " Lewis : " Red thunder-clouds, borne on the wings of the midnight whirlwind, floated, at fits, athwart the crimson-coloured orbit of the moon : the rising fierceness of the blast sighed through the stunted shrubs, which, bending before its violence, inclined towards the rocks whereon they grew : over the blackened expanse of heaven, at intervals, was spread the blue lightning's flash ; it played upon the granite heights, and with momentary brilliancy disclosed the terrific scenery of the Alps, whose gigantic and mis-shapen summits, reddened by the transitory moonbeam, were crossed by black fleeting fragments of the tempest-cloud."

" Lewis was a good man, a clever man, but a bore, a damned bore, one may say. . . . But I liked Lewis ; he was a Jewel of a Man had he been better set.

" *I'll give the lands of Deloraine*
Dark Musgrave were alive again !
That is
I would give many a Sugar Cane
Monk Lewis were alive again ! "

Byron had earlier given Lewis an excellent summary in *English Bards, and Scotch Reviewers* :

Oh ! wonder-working Lewis ! Monk, or Bard,
Who fain would make Parnassus a church-yard.
Lo ! wreaths of yew, not laurel, bind thy brow,
Thy Muse a Sprite, Apollo's sexton thou.
Whether on ancient tombs thou tak'st thy stand,
By gibb'ring spectres hailed, thy kindred band ;
Or tracest chaste descriptions on thy page,
To please the females of our modest age ;
All hail, M.P. ! from whose infernal brain
Thin sheeted phantoms glide, a grisly train.

Kelly was, of course, delighted when it was arranged that he should compose the music for " Monk " Lewis's ghostly play of *The Castle Spectre*, when it was staged at Drury Lane at the close of 1797. Lewis intended " to have exhibited a whole regiment of ghosts,"[1] but Sheridan protested and blue-pencilled much of the blue fire and spectral details. According to Byron, Lewis was very badly treated by Sheridan in the matter of *The Castle Spectre*, " which had an immense run " of thirty nights, and several revivals later, because the author never received his share of the profits. One day Lewis said, " I will bet you, Mr. Sheridan, a very *large* sum—what you owe *me* for my *Castle Spectre*." "I never make large bets," replied Sheridan, "but I will lay you a very *small* bet—what *The Castle Spectre* is *worth*." Lewis had his revenge in the epigram he wrote on Sheridan :

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[1] Lewis introduced several of the supernatural tales attached to his own home in boyhood, Stanstead Hall, Essex, though the actual scene of *The Castle Spectre* is Conway Castle.

For worst abuse of finest parts
Was Misophil begotten ;
There might indeed be blacker hearts,
But none could be more rotten.

Here is Kelly's account of *The Castle Spectre* :

"On December 14th, 1797, the celebrated dramatic romance, called *The Castle Spectre*, was produced at Drury Lane, written by M. G. Lewis, Esq. It had a prodigious run ; John Kemble performed in it, as did Mrs. Jordan and Mrs. Powell, who made a splendid spectre. The first night of its representation, the sinking of the Ghost in a flame of fire, and the beauty of the whole scene, had a most sublime effect. I composed the music for the piece ; but for the situation in which the Ghost first appears in the oratory to her daughter, and in which the acting both of Mrs. Powell and Mrs. Jordan, without speaking, rivetted the audience, I selected the chacoone of Jomelli as an accompaniment to the action. This chacoone had been danced at Stuttgart by Vestris, and was thought an odd choice of mine for so solemn a scene ; but the effect which it produced warranted the experiment.[1]

"Mr. M. Lewis, the author of this drama, though eccentric, had a great deal of genius. I knew him well, and have passed many pleasant hours in his society. I composed his Operas of *Adelmorn the Outlaw*, *The Wood Dæmon*, *Venoni*, *Adelgitha*, all for Drury Lane ; and a romantic drama, which he never brought forward, called *Zoroaster*. The last I composed was *One o'Clock*, produced at the Lyceum. Of all dramas *The Castle Spectre* was his favourite, perhaps from its having been the most attractive and popular ;

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[1] Kelly stated that the chacoone, or charconne (a slow dance movement) by Jomelli, used in *The Castle Spectre*, was also introduced into church services of the time, where it was known as "The Sanctus of Jomelli." (See later, p. 384.) Kelly and Mrs. Crouch did not play prominent parts in *The Castle Spectre*, but they assisted with the singing, particularly in the song and chorus of "Sing, Megen-oh ! Oh ! Megen-ee !" (See later, pp. 373–374.)

and yet it has been said it was the indirect cause of his death.

"After his father's decease, he went to Jamaica to visit his large estates. When there, for the amusement of his slaves, he caused his favourite drama, *The Castle Spectre*,[1] to be performed; they were delighted, but, of all parts which struck them, that which delighted them most was the character of Hassan, the black. He used indiscreetly to mix with these people in the hours of recreation, and seemed, from his mistaken urbanity and ill-judged condescension, to be their very idol. Presuming on indulgence which they were not prepared to feel or appreciate, they petitioned him to emancipate them. He told them that during his life-time it could not be done, but gave them a solemn promise that at his death they should have their freedom. Alas! it was a fatal promise for him; for on the passage homeward he died; it has been said by poison, administered by three of his favourite black brethren whom he was bringing to England to make free British subjects of, and who, thinking that by killing their master they should gain their promised liberty, in return for all his liberal treatment, put an end to his existence at the first favourable opportunity. This anecdote I received from a gentleman who was at Jamaica when Mr. Lewis sailed for England, and I relate it as I heard it without pledging myself to its entire authenticity. It is, however, notorious that he died at sea; and it has often been remarked that the death of a person so well known in the circles of literature and fashion, as he was, never created so slight a sensation. This evidently arose from circumstances which had removed him from the immediate world with which he had been accustomed to mix; and, having been already absent from it for a length of time, his departure from the general world was neither felt nor commented upon.

"I once received a command from His present Majesty, when

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[1] *The Castle Spectre* was revived many times, the last occasions in London being at the Gaiety Theatre for two matinée performances on May 5th and 12th, 1880, when J. D. Beveridge played Earl Osmond; J. L. Shine was the Father Philip; W. Elton the Motley; Miss Louise Willes the Angela; and Miss Hobson the Spectre of this production. It formed one of John Hollingshead's revivals of what he called "Palmy Day Neglected Dramas." Kelly would have been delighted, could he have known, that over eighty years after the original production the dramatic critic of *The Daily Telegraph* laid stress on "the tuneful music composed for the drama by Michael Kelly, which greatly helped to secure the highly favourable reception accorded" to *The Castle Spectre* in earlier days. The audience of 1880 treated the old drama disrespectfully as an amusing curiosity.

Prince of Wales, to compose a simple English ballad for him; and I had his gracious permission to publish it as composed for His Royal Highness, and dedicate it to him. I applied to my friend Lewis to write me one, which he did. The song was very popular, and sung by Incledon at Covent Garden Theatre. The last verse was so applicable to the fate of its author that I cannot resist giving the words.

To-morrow

A ballad written by M. G. Lewis, Esq., and composed by Michael Kelly, expressly for His Royal Highness the Prince of Wales.

1

A bankrupt in trade, fortune frowning on shore,
All lost—save my spirit and honour;
No choice being left, but to make to the oar,
I engaged in the Mars, *Captain Connor.*
But the winds call me some few words to say,
To Polly these moments I borrow,
For surely she grieves I leave her to-day,
And must sail on the salt seas to-morrow.

2

Nay, weep not, though Fortune her smile now denies,
Time may soften the gipsy's displeasure,
Perhaps she may throw in my way some rich prize,
And send me home loaded with treasure.
If so lucky, oh! doubt not, without more delay,
Will I hasten to banish your sorrow,
And bring back a heart that adores you to-day,
And will love you as dearly to-morrow.

3

But, ah! the fond hope may prove fruitless and vain,
Which my bosom now ventures to cherish,
In some perilous fight—I may haply be slain,
Or, o'erwhelmed, in the ocean may perish.
Should such be the fate of poor Tom, deign to pay
To his loss a fit tribute of sorrow,
And sometimes remember our parting to-day,
Should a wave be his coffin to-morrow."

Differing from Kelly's story, the more generally accepted account of "Monk" Lewis's death, in 1818, is that he succumbed to yellow fever, contracted on his estates just before he set sail, and a further story alleges that his end was hastened by his taking large quantities of James's Powders. The same charge was made against the powders after Goldsmith's death. "Monk" Lewis was forty-two when he died. The end came in the early morning, after a period of terrible delirium; "loud and bitter groans, and fearful imprecations burst from his lips whilst suffering the last pangs." He died in the arms of his Venetian servant, Baptista, or Tita, who was Byron's gondolier and also present at the poet's death, and later still in the service of Isaac D'Israeli and chief messenger at the India Office. "Monk" Lewis was buried the same day as he died. When the body was thrown into the sea it did not sink, as the weights became detached from the hammock-shroud; and, the wind getting under the canvas, the affrighted passengers and crew saw the grim package sailing back in the direction of Jamaica—away and away until it was but a speck on the ocean. This mysterious occurrence gave an added vogue to Lewis's tales of the supernatural.

As a successor to the successful *Castle Spectre*, Kelly determined to put on an English version of the French musical play, *Blue Beard*, which he had secured in Paris during his last visit. He composed the music for the London production, and proposed to George Colman[1] that he should be his collaborator for a couple of hundred pounds and write the words to the outline of

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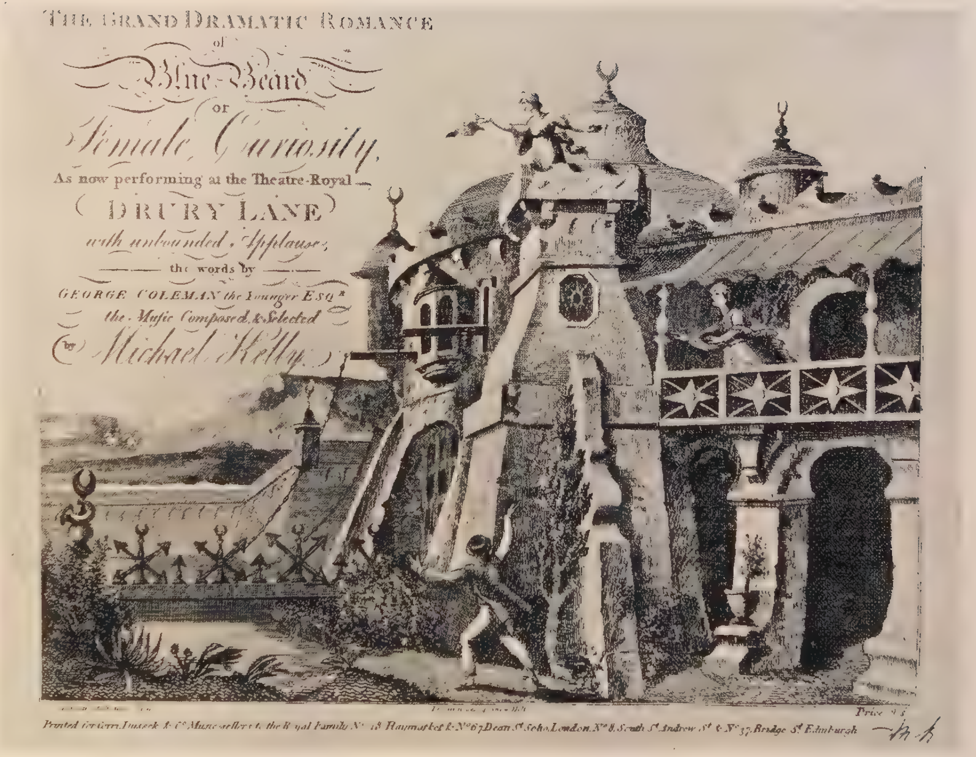
[1] George Colman, the younger (1762–1836), like "Monk" Lewis, was educated at Westminster and Christ Church, Oxford. Of his numerous dramas, the most popular were *The Heir-at-Law*, 1797, and *John Bull*, 1803. He was also the author of comic poems, such as "Broad Grins," which satirised the prevailing taste for ghosts and haunted castles, both in plays and novels, following the success of Lewis:

> "*A novel, now, is nothing more*
> *Than an old castle, and a creaking door:*
> *A distant hovel—*
> *Clanking of chains—a gallery—a light—*
> *Old armour—and a phantom all in white—*
> *And there's a novel.*"

George Colman was also the author of more curious work in rhyme, such as "The Rodiad," though he was a sedulous keeper of morals when Examiner of Plays during the last twelve years of his life. He was manager of the Haymarket Theatre, 1789–1813.



THE GRAND DRAMATIC ROMANCE
of
Blue-Beard
or
Female Curiosity,
As now performing at the Theatre-Royal
DRURY LANE
with unbounded Applause;
the words by
GEORGE COLEMAN the Younger Esq.ʳ
the Music Composed, & Selected
by Michael Kelly.
Price 3s
Printed for Corri, Dussek & Cᵒ Music sellers to the Royal Family Nᵒ 18 Haymarket & Nᵒ 67 Dean Sᵗ Soho, London. Nᵒ 8 South Sᵗ Andrew Sᵗ & Nᵒ 37 Bridge Sᵗ Edinburgh

SCENE FROM "BLUE BEARD," 1798, AT DRURY LANE

Miss De Camp, with waving handkerchief, singing "I see them galloping."
The other figures are Mrs. Crouch and J. Bannister.

the French romance he brought to him. After discussing the subject *and* a couple of bottles of wine, the dramatist agreed to the terms. Kelly went down with him to Colman's country cottage, "Mountains," nine miles from Tunbridge Wells, and within a week's time the work was completed.

Blue Beard was produced on January 16th, 1798, with every possible splendour and magnificence, but on the first night there was great bungling by the stage carpenters, and the machinery and "effects" all went wrong. At the end, when Blue Beard is slain by Selim, the corpse of the uxorious one disappears from sight through the stage, and in its place rises a skeleton—intended only to be visible for a moment or two before sinking again into the realms of darkness. But on this fateful occasion not one inch would the said skeleton move, but remained firmly fixed to view long after its appointed period on earth. Kelly, who had just been killing Blue Beard, totally forgot himself, rushed up with his drawn sabre and slashed at the poor skeleton's head until it suddenly vanished, vociferating the while in tones audible to the whole house, "Damn you! damn you! why don't you go down?" There were roars of laughter at this ridiculous scene, but the audience sympathised with the feelings of the infuriated composer and actor. Kelly feared the chances of the play were ruined, but at the end Miss De Camp (later Mrs. Charles Kemble)[1] sang the song, "I see them galloping! I see them galloping!" with such irresistible verve and force of expression as to call forth continued shouts of applause. Her startling scream of excitement and her waving handkerchief,[2] as she sighted the rescuers, created a sensation then and at every performance. The next day all the faults of machinery were rectified, and the piece settled down to a successful run, keeping its place in the repertory for twenty-six years. Kelly's music became extremely popular, in particular the pompously fine and stately Oriental

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[1] Marie Thérèse De Camp (1774–1838) came to England from Vienna at the age of twelve to appear at Drury Lane Theatre. She played Macheath in 1792, and later did well in Shaksperean parts, such as Portia, Desdemona, and Beatrice. She married Charles Kemble in 1806; and acted in her own plays, *The Day after the Wedding* (1808) and *Smiles and Tears* (1815), at Covent Garden Theatre. She was the mother of Fanny Kemble (1809–1893).

[2] Miss De Camp's seems to have been the first of the famous waving handkerchiefs of the stage. Eighty years later there was that of Kate Vaughan, most delightful of dancers; and forty years after hers was the sinister handkerchief of Madame Karsavina in the ballet of *Thamar*.

March. It had an unparalleled sale when published by Corri, Dussek and Company, Music-sellers to the Royal Family, of No. 28, Haymarket, at 8*s*.—" The Grand Dramatic Romance of Blue Beard, or Female Curiosity, As now performing at the Theatre Royal, Drury Lane, with unbounded applause, the words by George Coleman (*sic*) the Younger, Esq., the Music Composed and Selected by Michael Kelly." The first melodious " duett " sung by Mrs. Crouch and Kelly was appropriately affectionate for the circumstances of their private life together, of which the Drury Lane audiences were perfectly aware :

" *Twylight glimmers o'er the steep,*
Fatima, Fatima, wak'st thou, dear,
Grey-eyed morn begins to peep,
Fatima, Fatima, Selim's here.
Here are true love chords attaching to your window,
List, List."

" *Dearest, Selim, I've been watching,*" *etc.*

The most attractive song of the score was Mrs. Crouch's delightful little ballad with a plaintive tune in the true melody of the eighteenth century :

" *When pensive I thought of my love,*
The moon on the mountains was bright,
And Philomel down in the grove
Broke sweetly the silence of night ;
O, I wished that the tear-drop would flow,
But felt too much anguish to weep,
Till warm with the weight of my woe
I sunk on my pillow to sleep."

And so on for two more verses. William Robson, in *The Old Playgoer* (1846), says : " One of Mrs. Crouch's best songs was ' When pensive I thought of my love ' in *Blue Beard*, and sweetly and beautifully she sang it ; indeed, if you consult the genius of that song, and fancy it to be sung as well and as justly as possible, you will have a better idea of Mrs. Crouch's style than I could give you by writing a volume." Mr. Robson, presumably jealous of Michael Kelly's enviable position in the private life of Mrs. Crouch, professed to dislike what he considered the actor's rather effeminate mannerisms and voice, which latter, when heard in duets with Mrs. Crouch, seemed to him like a jew's harp competing with a violin: "I suppose Michael Kelly had had a fine voice, but I never liked him—there was a harshness, a grating in his tones in his decline . . . that was particularly unpleasant. To have by his singing powers attained his position in Society, and to have been honoured by an intimacy with Mozart and other great composers, he must have been something—but: I did not like him; to me his singing was neither manly nor sweet."

John Bannister and Mrs. Bland made a great hit with their "Tink-a-tink" song, as did Mrs. Bland alone in "Can I My Comely Turk forget." Madame Parisot danced as an alluring houri in the scene of the illuminated garden. The music of "I see them galloping, I see them galloping" curiously prefigured the typical rhythm of an Offenbach gallop of sixty years later; indeed, the melody, the key, and the time are identical with those of "Ah! que j'aime les militaires" in *The Grand Duchess*. When *Blue Beard* was published as a booklet, Colman, the author, paid a well-merited compliment to the composer. He said: "I have given an opportunity to Mr. Kelly of fully establishing his reputation as a Musical Composer with a Publick whose favour he has long and deservedly experienced as a singer. Crowded audiences have testified the most strong and decided approbation of his original Musick in *Blue Beard*. . . . Dully as the matter of fact may be stated, I feel gratified in relating this truism of a worthy and industrious man.[1] Add to this, I have brought forward young Greenwood (a scene-painter of nineteen) to shew design and execution of uncommon promise."

The scenery and effects for this production were elaborate for the period. Kelly relates:

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[1] Colman elsewhere testified further to Kelly's happy disposition and the qualities which ever made him popular with his numerous friends: "Mr. Kelly had the rare talent of acquiring and preserving the good opinion of every man with whom he became acquainted: not by sycophancy, but by cordiality of manners, a heartiness, a warmth, which convinced you that to render you a service was a pleasure done to himself. . . . He was full of liveliness, and a pleasant companion at all times; even during those visitations (and they were not 'few and far between') when fretfulness and despondency might have been expected to be the companions of suffering and of pain."

"The second act of *Blue Beard* opened with a view of the Spahi's horses at a distance; these horses were admirably made of pasteboard, and answered every purpose for which they were wanted. One morning, Mr. Sheridan, John Kemble, and myself went to the property-room of Drury Lane Theatre, and there found Johnston, the able and ingenious machinist, at work upon the horses, and on the point of beginning the elephant, which was to carry Blue Beard. Mr. Sheridan said to Johnston, 'Don't you think, Johnston, you had better go to Pidcock's, at Exeter Change, and hire an elephant for a number of nights?' 'Not I, sir,' replied the enthusiastic machinist; 'if I cannot make a better elephant than that at Exeter Change, I deserve to be hanged.' . . . It may be worth noticing that the Blue Beard who rode the elephant in perspective over the mountains was little Edmund Kean, who at that time little thought he would become a first-class actor."

One word more about *Blue Beard*. In the British Museum is preserved a slip of paper bearing the words:

"Dec. 8.99. Mr. Kelly Bets Mr. Sheridan a Rump and Dozen that the King comes to Drury Lane Theatre this season to the performance of *Blue Beard*.

"M. Kelly.
"R. Sheridan.
"At 40, Curzon Street."[1]

Probably the King did come to see the piece, for, as will be seen later, he was at Drury Lane on a momentous night in the following year.

The large financial receipts from *Blue Beard* induced the managers of Drury Lane to add a musical after-piece a year later, January, 1799. This was entitled *Feudal Times, or The Banquet Gallery*, written by Colman and the music composed by Kelly. Although Mrs. Crouch sang exquisitely "The Maid of the Wold," and the play mounted with great splendour, it was not so successful as its predecessor. But before this, three other musical dramas had been produced at the theatre, the most remarkable being *Aurelio and Miranda*, in December,

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[1] According to *Boyle's Court Guide* for 1799, No. 40, Curzon Street was then the residence of the Hon. Colonel Rawdon: the occupant in 1798 was the Hon. Charles Dundas.

1798, adapted from the popular romance of the day, *The Monk*, by M. G. Lewis[1]: but, curiously enough, although the public for the last three years had demanded plays dealing with ghosts, demons, and supernatural effects, this drama proved to be too alarming, and the nerves of the spectators were harried by Kemble's ghostly presentment of the demon-ridden monk:

"It was only acted six nights; many thought it indecorous to represent a church on the stage (which, by the way, was a fine specimen of the art, painted by Capon). But the powerful objection was the unearthly appearance of Kemble as the monk. I never shall forget his attitude immediately after his entrance; his dress—the look—the *tout ensemble*—struck me to be more than human. He was haled with the most rapturous applause; but he stood motionless, with uplifted eyes, and apparently regardless of the public tribute."[2]

Mrs. Siddons was the Miranda, and apparently was not too demonesque for the feelings of the audience: "Some persons said it was sacrilegious to represent a *church* upon the stage, and still more so for Mr. Kemble, as Aurelio, to make himself look so like a *divinity*; and others, that Mrs. Siddons, as Miranda, *ought* to have been a *devil*. We heard no disapprobation expressed against the *divine* appearance of Aurelio; but certainly it was no sooner found out that Miranda was a virtuous woman, instead of a demon, than many in the pit and galleries evinced dissatisfaction."

Kelly and Mrs. Crouch were not in this "Monk" Lewisian drama, but they played in the previous piece at Drury Lane, *The Captive of Spilburg*, in November, 1798, for which the music was supplied by Dussek.

It is curious that Kelly in his *Reminiscences* never mentions the name of the famous clown, Joe Grimaldi (1778–1837), who was intimately associated with Drury Lane Theatre. Grimaldi was one of the children who, like Edmund Kean, appeared in *Cymon*, and as a youth he had parts in the musical spectacles of *Lodoiska*, *Blue Beard*, and *Feudal Times*. He relates in his *Memoirs* that at the beginning of the Drury Lane season of 1800 he met Sheridan, who observed, " Well, Joe, still living—eh ? " " Yes, sir, and, what's more, married as well." " Oho ! Pretty young woman, Joe ? " " Very pretty, sir." " That's right. You must lead a domestic life, Joe : nothing like a domestic life for happiness, Joe. I lead a domestic life myself." And then came one of those twinkling, humorous glances so characteristic of Sheridan. " I mean to do, sir." " Right. But, Joe, what will your poor little wife do while you are at the theatre of an evening ? Very bad thing, Joe, to let a pretty young wife be alone of a night. I'll manage it for you, Joe : I'll put her name down upon the free list—herself and friend. But mind it's a female friend, that's all, Joe ; any other might be dangerous—eh, Joe ? " Sheridan kept his promise. Mrs. Grimaldi availed herself of the privilege and attended the theatre almost every night that her husband played, and after the performance they went home together, until her sad death in childbirth later in the year, 1800.

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[1] In the spring of 1797 there was produced at Covent Garden "a grand and interesting ballet," adapted from Lewis's *The Monk* and entitled *Raymond and Agnes, or the Castle of Lindenberg*, the music composed by William Reeve (1757–1815), actor, organist, and composer. In the last-named capacity he was particularly associated with Astley's.

[2] In the previous year, August, 1797, another evil monk had received stage attention in *The Italian Monk*, by James Boaden (1762–1839), adapted from Mrs. Radcliffe's powerful romance, *The Italian*, which had appeared that year. Palmer played the part of the wicked monk, Schedoni, with Charles Kemble as Vivaldi, and Miss De Camp as Ellena Rosalba.

Mrs. Crouch's health was now beginning to decline, and at times Kelly had to find another singer to perform her customary rôles with him. Miss Griffiths thus played Polly and Clarissa to his Macheath and Lionel at the Little Theatre in the Haymarket, in 1798. She was the fourteen-year-old daughter of the stage-door keeper at the Edinburgh Theatre, and was employed in that house to sweep the stage and so on. The girl became so infatuated with Mrs. Crouch and her acting (when in Edinburgh) that she ran away from home and followed her to London without telling her relations of the intention. She walked all the way on foot from Edinburgh, and found her object of adoration in Lisle Street. Mrs. Crouch was much touched and took care of the girl ; finding she had a good voice and much intelligence, she gave her lessons in singing, with the result that Miss Griffiths soon became an accomplished vocalist and actress. She eventually married an actor on the Dublin stage named Stewart.

It was in 1795 that Kelly and Mrs. Crouch removed from Suffolk Street to a house, No. 9, in New Lisle Street, near Leicester Square, which the lady " fitted up according to her own excellent taste." The west portion of Lisle Street had been built in the early part of the eighteenth century on land directly west of the gardens of Leicester House, which in Faden's map of 1780 extended up to Gerrard Street. By the close of the eighteenth century the upper portion of the grounds of Leicester House (demolished in 1788) were covered by an extension of Lisle Street to the east, where it joined Little Newport Street. Much confusion is caused by the numeration of these new houses commencing with No. 1 again, instead of continuing the numbering from the older houses in the street. Kelly evidently lived in one of the new dwellings, because his music published at this period bears the words, "Printed for the author and to be had of him at No. 9, New Lisle Street." Presumably it was the other and older No. 9 which was an early home of Edmund Kean at the time he was a wild London gamin. He lived with an uncle, Moses Kean, who is said to have made the lad wear a brass collar bearing the words, "This boy belongs to No. 9, Lisle Street, Leicester Square; please bring him home."[1] This would have been about 1797–1800. It was originally intended to build a theatre in the gardens of Leicester House. Kelly states that "upon this scite (*sic*) an Italian Opera House was to have been erected by a Mr. O'Reilly, a clever and ingenious man, under the patronage of the Marquis of Salisbury (whose estate it was), but the project fell to the ground, and the theatre never rose from it." It appears that R. B. O'Reilly had purchased the claim of the Vanbrugh family to produce opera in London, and he intended to build his new Opera House on that portion of Leicester Fields which had been occupied by the "Prince of Wales's palace, afterwards the repository of Sir Ashton Lever's museum," and on April 9th, 1790, he advertised that he had obtained a patent for a new Opera House in Leicester Square, "and no other patent in existence." But he was wrong: the Royal Patent Theatres of Drury Lane and Covent Garden were all powerful. O'Reilly eventually obtained the Pantheon, which was opened as an Opera House in February, 1791, and eight years later his debts on this venture, amounting to £30,000, were taken over by William Taylor, who had obtained a licence for the Opera House in the Haymarket in 1792. The Pantheon was burned down on January 14th, 1792. (See *ante*, p. 206.)

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[1] See *ante*, pp. 205–206.

Kelly would have been amazed could he have known that in less than a hundred years after his time in Lisle Street the Empire Theatre would stand opposite to his house, and be later still a place for producing "talking films"; and that two other theatres, Daly's and the Hippodrome, would be built in succeeding years on the same line of frontage.

It was at 9, Lisle Street that Kelly and Mrs. Crouch had an experience illustrating the fact that even a hundred and thirty years ago there were difficulties in securing satisfactory domestic servants, however good their preliminary references might appear to be:

"I had advertised in the newspapers that I was in want of a man-servant. A middle-aged man came after the place, an Irishman. He said he had lived with a gentleman of fortune, of the name of Pritchard, who resided chiefly at his country house, in Epping Forest, but was often at an hotel in South Molton Street; if I could make it convenient to call there the next day he would be in town, and I might get his character. I went the next day to the hotel; the waiter informed me that Mr. Pritchard had been there, and waited for me as long as he could, but would call upon me in Lisle Street. When I returned to dinner, Mrs. Crouch told me that an elderly gentleman, in deep mourning, of the name of Pritchard had called upon me, in a job carriage. She described him as a particularly interesting old gentleman. He gave the Irishman an excellent character, and said that he should not have parted with him upon any account; but that, having recently become a widower, he felt it necessary to reduce his establishment. Mrs. Crouch gave so favourable a description of the 'elderly gentleman,' and the elderly gentleman had given her such a favourable description of his Irish servant, that we were perfectly satisfied, and the man was directed to come to his place.

"After he had been in my service some days (it was in the winter-time), Mrs. Crouch's own maid came into my room about four o'clock in the morning, and said she heard such a noise in the passage as convinced her that somebody was endeavouring to break into the house. I rose, and crept softly to the head of the stairs and listened, when I heard the respectable Hibernian protégé of the highly respectable elderly gentleman from Epping Forest say, through the keyhole of the street door, ‘ Be quiet ! The maid-servants are not gone to bed. Come back in an hour ; the plate is in the back drawing-room.’ This was pretty conclusive evidence of the liberal intentions of my new servant touching the disposition of my property. I immediately got my sword and proceeded to the passage, where I found the object of my search. I told him that if he stirred one inch I would run him through the body. In the meantime one of the maids called a watchman, and the culprit was consigned to the coal-cellar for the rest of the night. In the morning I consulted Mr. Holloway, my solicitor, as to my future conduct in the business ; and he, knowing professionally the difficulties, doubts, and expense of prosecuting and punishing criminals, advised me to profit by my experience and turn the fellow away. I followed his counsel and discharged my servant.

“ One morning, about six weeks afterwards, while I was at the Opera House superintending a rehearsal, a Bow Street officer came to me from Mr. Bond, with his compliments, to request my immediate attendance at the Police Office. I obeyed the magistrate’s wishes, and, to my great astonishment, found, seated on the bench, beside the magistrates, Mrs. Crouch, and her sister, Mrs. Horrebow ; my ci-devant Hibernian servant at the bar, in custody, in company with his ally, the respectable elderly gentleman, who had so liberally given his friend that which he had not himself—a character. He was, however, no longer dressed in mourning, but in a light-coloured coat, all in tatters, looking quite miserable. It appeared that, through the recommendation of Mr. Pritchard, the worthy Irishman got into the service of a clergyman at Clerkenwell, into whose house one night, the family being all at rest, he admitted two thieves, who stripped it of every thing moveable. Upon closer examination of the circumstances, it turned out that he belonged to a gang of house-breakers, who kept Mr. Pritchard in pay for the express purpose of giving false characters. Mr. Pritchard was sent to Newgate ; and the Irishman, having been found guilty at the Old Bailey, was hanged, after having confessed the commission of innumerable atrocities.”

In 1795 also, Kelly and Mrs. Crouch had a country retreat, looking on to the river, at York Place,[1] Nine Elms, Battersea Fields (which many years later were converted into Battersea Park, and Kelly's cottage was near to the present York Road and Battersea Park railway stations—noise and drab surroundings he, happily, never was to envisage). Here Mrs. Crouch's father, Peregrine Phillips, spent a good deal of his time, for he was in failing health. But in 1798 the party obtained an even more delightful rural home in the King's Road, Chelsea, a cottage in the Gothic style, which Mrs. Crouch "adorned with such elegant simplicity for her rural retreat, and the tranquil abode of her father, still anxious to bring him nearer town, that she might visit him oftener, and yet place him in a situation where he might enjoy salubrious air. There she might live recluse, or in the busy world, as the King's Road is a very public way for carriages; Colville's Nursery, to which the cottage is directly opposite,[2] is a great resort for persons of fashion, and seems admirably calculated for a promenade for the neighbouring inhabitants. Never did any person love *home* better than Mrs. Crouch, even when she was occupied by her profession; she read, amused herself at Chelsea with weeding the garden, and keeping it in order. . . . She particularly enjoyed select parties at Chelsea, for the Gothic hall of the cottage would contain a dinner party of fifteen, if not twenty, persons commodiously."

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[1] York Place is still included in *The London Directory*, though the only entry is Garton Sons, manufacturers of brewers' sugar. Near by is a terrace of fairly old houses, which probably succeeded the more rural cottages of Kelly's time. The situation is at the corner of Stewart's Road.

[2] Mr. Reginald Blunt informs me that Mrs. Crouch's cottage, built in 1797, occupied the site of the chapel of the Royal Military Asylum, or Duke of York's School, at the corner of the present Cheltenham Terrace. "Just opposite, on the north side of the King's Road, was Colville's Nursery Garden." Faulkner, in his *History of Chelsea*, quotes a poem by S. J. Pratt, sent to him in 1810, which extols this garden:

> "*Where smiling Chelsea spreads the cultured lands*
> *Sacred to Flora a pavilion stands,*
> *And yet a second temple neighbouring near*
> *Nurses the fragrance of the various year:*
> *Of Davy this, of Colville that the care,*
> *While both the favour of the goddess share.*"

And so on. The name of the nursery-man survives in the *Colville Arms* tavern standing on part of the former garden at the corner of Blacklands Terrace and King's Road. Views of Mrs. Crouch's picturesque cottage are preserved in the Chelsea Public Library.

In her pleasant garden here, Mrs. Crouch gave Arcadian parties under the shade of the fine trees in the style made fashionable by Marie Antoinette at Le Petit Trianon and Queen Charlotte at Kew. All around the cottage at Chelsea were farms, nursery gardens, and orchards, which conveniently provided the fruits and cream for the syllabubs dispensed at these alfresco receptions, so delightfully artificial with the contrast of rurality and the voluminous, sweeping dresses of silk and satin, and the great Gainsborough hats and plumes, worn by the ladies. These happy days of halcyon summer holiday continued until Mr. Phillips's death in 1801 : four years later the shadows closed in for his beautiful daughter. After her death, her memoirist, M. J. Young, looked sadly back to this last summer at Chelsea :

" Her heart expanded to the various beauties of nature, from the simplest wild flower that enamels the lawn, to the peerless rose. She taught the woodbine and the jessamine to wind around the boles of her trees, and throw themselves among the branches ; they also richly adorn the Gothic porch of the hall, and near it stands a tall, wide-spreading hawthorn, which every spring is covered with the richest bloom. She said : ' That hawthorn is my favourite tree, it not only charms my sight with a light snow of beautiful blossoms, whose fragrance I continually inhale, but it attracts a nightingale, who perches on the boughs to chant her evening song ; with what pleasure I listen to her, and repeat Milton's charming address, " Sweet bird that shun'st the noise of folly ! " ' These were her words last *spring* : little did we imagine that she would never see her favourite bloom again, nor hear her nightingale sing. We cannot make the bird chant her melancholy song, nor the hawthorn blossom over the grave of Mrs. Crouch *this spring*."

But this threnody should more rightly find a later place in these records, for, here, we are still in 1798, and looking at a Chelsea when nightingales sang there, a place where they will never be heard again ; and still we can see Mrs. Crouch standing in her garden in the meridian of her charms, as another of her faithful admirers depicted her—" Mrs. Crouch was one of those lovely women of whom lovers and poets often rave and write, but such as people in sober earnest seldom see . . . she was really a delightful singer."[1] There was evidently great charm of personality, an arresting appeal, that made Mrs. Crouch appear so lovely to men, for some of her portraits do not convey an idea of exceptional beauty; and a female observer, Mrs. Oxberry, says " she was excessively pleasing, though not in our estimation strictly beautiful." Mrs. Crouch was essentially feminine and had all the charm of the immature in her early years on the stage, the quality which is stressed in the *Memoirs* of George Frederick Cooke, where Miss Phillips's acting as Miranda in *The Tempest* is described as " the personification of innocent loveliness."

And let us quote some of the words of a love-stricken young gentleman who addressed a poem of ninety-two lines to Miss Phillips, which was duly printed in a London newspaper; and " so fashionable was the fair subject of those lines, that the paper was called for with such avidity that a second edition of it was obliged to be printed in the course of the day." In this vein he pictured his goddess:

" *Ah,*" *cried the fond, the hopeless lover,*
" *No dawn of hope can I discover.*
When Anna sings, Attention's ear
Thinks 'tis the music of the sphere—
She looks, she moves, and I adore her
Without the courage to implore her.
No giddy, light, fantastic airs
In her enchanting form appears;
Sweet innocence, and artless grace,
Heighten the charm of Anna's face:
Her modest blush—her look serene,
Through which the virtuous mind is seen,
Conspire to captivate my soul,
Nor reason can their power controul.
Still must I sigh, and love in vain,
And know no period to my pain;
Since Cupid's darts, by Anna thrown,
Will pierce all bosoms but her own."
He ceased—and sunk upon the dewy ground;
With willows scarcely green his head was crowned.

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[1] William Robson in *The Old Playgoer.*

CHAPTER VI

With Sheridan at Drury Lane

The year 1799 found Kelly in complete control of the musical arrangements at Drury Lane, and he now had the gratification of having his name billed with Sheridan in the production of the author-manager's famous play of *Pizarro*, for which Kelly, at Sheridan's request, composed the whole of the music. *Pizarro* was admittedly adapted from the German drama, *Die Spanier in Peru oder Rolla's Tod*, by August von Kotzebue (1761–1819), another of whose plays was well known in England as *The Stranger*[1] : but Sheridan seems rather to have stolen the fire of poor " Monk " Lewis, who this same year produced his version of Kotzebue's popular drama under the title of *Rolla, or the Peruvian Hero*. It was never acted, as Sheridan's *Pizarro* occupied the ground completely. Lewis had a further grievance, inasmuch that another of his plays, *The East Indian*, put on at Drury Lane for two performances in April, 1799, and superbly acted by Mrs. Jordan and Kemble, was debarred a run by Sheridan, who took the stage " mounted on his great tragic war-horse *Pizarro*," trampling Lewis's "humble pad-nag of a comedy under foot without the least compunction."

Pizarro, though no longer regarded as an example of Sheridan's best work, came at the most opportune time for an England alarmed by the recent French Revolution and the sudden rise of a super-tyrant in the person of Napoleon. Kotzebue was the most conservative of dramatists ; he declaimed against all liberal ideas and the freedom of the Press ; he held up the state of Europe before the French Revolution as the perfection of Government and happiness ; he never ceased to denounce Napoleon as the Arch-Fiend.[2] His clamant proclamation of his opinions caused his death, for a political opponent, Sand, a student of Jena, stabbed him to death at Mannheim in 1819. How acceptable were Kotzebue's anti-revolutionary views to the English playgoers of 1799 is evidenced by a criticism of thirty years later:

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[1] It was in the previous year, March 24th, 1798, that *The Stranger* was first performed, with Kemble in the name part and Mrs. Siddons as Mrs. Haller. William Linley wrote the prologue, " Monk " Lewis the epilogue, and Sheridan " a beautiful and very pathetic song, which was composed by the Duchess of Devonshire, and sung by Mrs. Bland with great effect."

[2] *Pizarro* was revived as late as 1856, when perhaps its tirades, taken as against France and Napoleon, were again appropriate in view of Napoleon III, who was then fast becoming the bugbear of Europe and soon to be styled Anti-Christ by the prophet Michael Baxter.

"Never was a piece *better timed* than *Pizarro*. The English nation, viewing revolutionary France with horror and dread—threatened too with an incursion on their shores—were excited to a high pitch of loyal enthusiasm, and rallied round their monarch as one man, to preserve inviolate his rights, and consequently *their own*. At this eventful crisis, *Pizarro* made its appearance at Drury Lane, and was hailed with rapture by a long succession of as brilliant audiences as ever graced a theatre. Every allusion that bore, however remotely, upon public feeling was seized with the utmost avidity; while the more direct and palpable appeals were applauded to the very echo. . . . The character of Rolla is boldly drawn—brave, generous, humane. His is the true *amor patriæ*, that has no wish, no ambition, but the general good. Pizarro is like *all* tyrants—crafty, timorous, and cruel. . . . Nothing could be grander than Kemble's Rolla: his noble countenance and figure gave us a perfect idea of the Peruvian chief . . . his countenance was fire, and his animated figure was a model for the sculptor . . . he was sublime. Mrs. Siddons did more for Elvira than could have been anticipated of any actress. She imparted dignity and feeling to that which was turgid; and when she encountered something of a higher mood, it came from her lips as if by inspiration."

In addition to Mrs. Siddons and Kemble, the wonderful cast of *Pizarro* included Mrs. Jordan, Mrs. Crouch, Charles Kemble, and Miss De Camp. Kelly gives an intensely interesting account of the strange circumstances in which Sheridan finished *Pizarro* while the first performance was actually in progress and the actors waiting for the later portions of their parts:

"Expectation was on tip-toe; and, strange as it may appear, *Pizarro* was advertised, and every box in the house taken, before the fourth act of the play was begun; nor had I one single word of the poetry for which I was to compose the music. Day after day, was I attending on Mr. Sheridan, representing that time was flying; and that nothing was done for me. His answer uniformly was, 'Depend upon it, my dear Mic, you shall have plenty of matter to go on with to-morrow'; but day after day that morrow came not, which, as my name was advertised as the composer of the music, drove me half crazy.

"One day I was giving a dinner to the Earl of Guilford, the Marquis of Ormonde (then Lord Ormonde), my valued friend Sir Charles Bampfylde, Sir Francis Burdett, George Colman, J. Richardson, M. Lewis, and John Kemble; and, about ten o'clock, when I was in the full enjoyment of this charming society, Mr. Sheridan appeared before us, and informed my friends that he must carry me off with him, that moment, to Drury Lane; begged they would excuse my absence for one hour, and he would return with me. I saw it would be useless to contradict him, so I went to the theatre, and found the stage and house lighted up, as it would have been for a public performance; not a human being there, except ourselves, the painters, and carpenters; and all this preparation was merely that he might see two scenes, those of Pizarro's tent and the Temple of the Sun.

"The great author established himself in the centre of the pit, with a large bowl of negus on the bench before him; nor would he move until it was finished. I expostulated with him upon the cruelty of not letting me have the words which I had to compose, not to speak of his having taken me away from my friends, to see scenery and machinery, with which, as I was neither painter, nor carpenter, nor machinist, I could have nothing to do: his answer was, that he wished me to see the Temple of the Sun, from which the choruses and marches were to come over the platform. 'To-morrow,' said he, 'I promise I will come and take a cutlet with you, and tell you all you have to do. My dear Mic, you know you can depend upon me; and I know that I can depend upon you; but these bunglers of carpenters require looking after.'

"After this promise, we returned to my house; I found my party waiting; nor did we separate until five o'clock in the morning.

"To my utter surprise, the next day, according to his own appointment, Mr. Sheridan really came to dinner: after the cloth was removed, he proposed business. I had pen, ink, music-paper, and a small pianoforte (which the Duke of Queensberry had given me, and which he had been accustomed to take with him in his carriage when he travelled) put down upon the table with our wine. My aim was to discover the situations of the different choruses and the marches, and Mr. Sheridan's ideas on the subject; and he gave them in the following manner: 'In the Temple of the Sun,' said he, 'I want the virgins of the sun, and their high priest, to chaunt a solemn invocation to their deity.' I sang two or three bars of music to him, which I thought corresponded with what he wished, and marked them down. He then made a sort of rumbling noise with his voice (for he had not the smallest idea of turning a tune), resembling a deep, gruff 'bow, wow, wow'; but, though there was not the slightest resemblance of an air in the noise he made, yet so clear were his ideas of effect, that I perfectly understood his meaning, though conveyed through the medium of a bow, wow, wow. Having done this, and pointed out their several situations, he promised me faithfully, that I should have the poetry in a couple of days; and, marvellous to say, he actually did send me Cora's song, which Mrs. Jordan sang; and the trio, sung by Mrs. Crouch, Miss De Camp, and Miss Leak, 'Fly away, time,'[1] which they made very effective. The poetry of the last, however, was written by my good friend, Mr. Richardson; the song really by himself. Having extracted these, I saw that it was perfectly ridiculous to expect the poetry of the choruses from the author of the play; and, as I knew a literary gentleman, whose poverty, if not his will, would consent to assist me, I gave him Mr. Sheridan's ideas, as I had caught them from his bow, wow, wows, and got him to write words to them, which he did very well; at least, well enough to answer my purpose.

"But if this were a puzzling situation for a composer, what will my readers think of that in which the actors were left, when I state the fact that at the time the house was overflowing on the first night's performance, all that was written of the play was actually rehearsing, and that, incredible as it may appear, until the end of the fourth act, neither Mrs. Siddons, nor Charles Kemble, nor Barrymore had all their speeches for the fifth? Mr. Sheridan was upstairs in the prompter's room, where he was writing the last part of the play, while the earlier parts were acting; and every ten minutes he brought down as much of the dialogue as he had done, piecemeal, into the green-room, abusing himself and his negligence, and making a thousand winning and soothing apologies for having kept the performers so long in such painful suspense.

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[1] *Fly away, Time, nor be the anxious hour delayed—*
Fly away, Time, that soothes the heart by grief dismayed;
Should ghastly death in view,
We can dare it;
With friends we love, so brave, so true,
We will share it.

"One remarkable trait in Sheridan's character was his penetrating knowledge of the human mind: for no man was more careful in his carelessness; he was quite aware of his power over his performers, and of the veneration in which they held his great talents; had he not been so, he would not have ventured to keep them (Mrs. Siddons particularly) in the dreadful anxiety which they were suffering through the whole of the evening. Mrs. Siddons told me, that she was in an agony of fright; but Sheridan perfectly knew that Mrs. Siddons, C. Kemble, and Barrymore were quicker in study than any other performers concerned; and that he could trust them to be perfect in what they had to say, even at half an hour's notice. And the event proved that he was right: the play was received with the greatest approbation, and, though brought out so late in the season, was played thirty-one nights; and for years afterwards proved a mine of wealth to the Drury Lane Treasury, and, indeed, to all the theatres in the United Kingdom.

"Such, however, were the delays during the first night's performance, that the play did not end until within five minutes of midnight! The farce of *My Grandmother* was to follow, but the exhaustion of the audience was so complete, that, when the after-piece commenced, only seventeen persons remained in the whole dress circle, and twenty-two in the pit."

There was great excitement and uproar throughout the theatre during the first performance of *Pizarro*. Another account relates, "the crowd was so immense, and the eagerness so great to see *Pizarro*, that the pit was nearly filled by those who paid box price, and got over into it from the lower boxes. Many windows were broken to give air to the almost stifled crowds in the passages; and one of the door-keepers had his ribs broken by endeavouring to restrain the impetuosity of the throng where the money is taken."

It is stated that Sheridan received £25,000 from *Pizarro* during its run of five weeks. Kelly had many stories to relate concerning Sheridan's carelessness, cool inertia, and general inattention to his own interests. Thus when *The Critic* was produced in 1779:

"Two days previous to the performance, the last scene was not written. Dr. Ford and Mr. Linley, the joint proprietors, began to get nervous and fidgety, and the actors were absolutely *au désespoir*, especially King, who was not only stage manager, but had to play Puff; to him was assigned the duty of hunting down and worrying Sheridan about the last scene. Day after day passed until, as I have just said, the last day but two arrived and it made not its appearance.

"At last, Mr. Linley, who, being his father-in-law, was pretty well aware of his habits, hit upon a stratagem. A night rehearsal of *The Critic* was ordered, and Sheridan, having dined with Linley, was prevailed upon to go; while they were on the stage, King whispered Sheridan that he had something particular to communicate, and begged he would step into the second green-room. Accordingly, Sheridan went, and there found a table with pens, ink, and paper, a good fire, an armed chair at the table, and two bottles of claret, with a dish of anchovy sandwiches. The moment he got into the room, King stepped out and locked the door, immediately after which Linley and Ford came up and told the author that until he had written the scene he would be kept where he was.

"Sheridan took this decided measure in good part; he ate the anchovies, finished the claret, wrote the scene, and laughed heartily at the ingenuity of the contrivance.

"This anecdote I had from King himself. Another instance of his readiness and rapidity, when he chose to exert himself, occurred at the time when his pantomime of *Robinson Crusoe* was in rehearsal. He happened to call in at the theatre one day, and found them in the greatest confusion, not knowing what to introduce to give time for the setting of a scene. It was suggested to Mr. Sheridan that a song would afford sufficient opportunity to the carpenters for their preparation; accordingly he sat down at the prompter's table on the stage, and wrote on the back of a play-bill the beautiful ballad of *The Midnight Watch*, which was set to music by his father-in-law, Mr. Linley, in a style which has established it as one of the most beautiful specimens of pure English melody.

" An observation Mr. Sheridan once made to me about Congreve's plays I venture to repeat, it has so much genuine wit about it : he complained to me that *Love for Love* had been so much altered and modified for the more delicate ear of modern audiences, that it was quite spoiled. ' His plays,' said the wit, ' are, I own, somewhat licentious, but it is barbarous to mangle them, they are like horses, when you deprive them of their vice they lose their vigour.' "

Again, when *The Duenna* was revived at Drury Lane in 1807, wherein Kelly played the part of Ferdinand, he relates an amazing instance of Sheridan's indifference to his own literary reputation :

" It was customary with me when I played at night to read my part over in the morning in order to refresh my memory. One morning after reading the part of Ferdinand, I left the printed play of *The Duenna* as then acted on the table. On my return home, after having taken my ride, I found Mr. Sheridan reading it, and, with pen and ink before him, correcting it. He said to me, ' Do you act the part of Ferdinand from this printed copy ? ' I replied in the affirmative, and added that I had done so for twenty years. ' Then,' said he, ' you have been acting great nonsense.' He examined every sentence and corrected it all through before he left me ; the corrections I have now in his own hand-writing. What could prove his negligence more than correcting an opera which he had written in 1775 in the year 1807 ; and then for the first time examining it and abusing the manner in which it was printed ?

" I knew, however, of many instances of his negligence equally strong, two of which I will adduce as tolerable good specimens of character. I can vouch for their authenticity.

" Mr. Gotobed, the Duke of Bedford's attorney, put a distress into Drury Lane Theatre for nonpayment of the ground rent ; and the chandeliers, wardrobe, scenery, etc., were to be sold to satisfy His Grace's claim. Sheridan, aroused and alarmed at the threat, wrote a letter to the Duke, requesting him to let his claim be put in a state of liquidation by Mr. Gotobed's receiving out of the pit door money £10 per night until the debt should be paid ; this was agreed upon by His Grace. More than a twelvemonth passed, and Sheridan was astonished at receiving no reply to his letter. In an angry mood he went to Mr. Gotobed's house in Norfolk Street (I was with him at the time), complaining of the transaction ; when Mr. Gotobed assured him on his honour that the Duke had sent an answer to his letter above a year before.

" On hearing this, Sheridan went home, examined the table on which all his letters were thrown, and amongst them found the Duke's letter unopened, dated more than twelve months back. To me, this did not appear very surprising ; for when numbers of letters have been brought to him at my house I have seen him consign the greatest part of them to the fire unopened.

" No man was ever more sore and frightened at criticism than he was, from his first outset in life. He dreaded the newspapers, and always courted their friendship. I have many times heard him say, ' Let me but have the periodical Press on my side, and there should be nothing in this country which I would not accomplish.'

" This sensitiveness of his as regarded newspapers renders the following anecdote rather curious : after he had fought his famous duel at Bath with Colonel Matthews on Mrs. Sheridan's (Miss Linley's) account, an article of the most venomous kind was sent from Bath to Mr. William Woodfall, the Editor of *The Public Advertiser* in London, to insert in that paper. The article was so terribly bitter against Sheridan that Woodfall took it to him. After reading it he said to Woodfall, ' My good friend, the writer of this article has done his best to vilify me in all ways, but he has done it badly and clumsily. I will write a character of myself as coming from an anonymous writer which you will insert in your paper. In a day or two after, I will send you another article, as coming from another anonymous correspondent, vindicating me, and refuting most satisfactorily, point by point, every particle of what has been written in the previous one.'

" Woodfall promised that he would attend to his wishes ; and Sheridan accordingly wrote one of the most vituperative articles against himself, that mortal ever penned, which he sent to Woodfall, who immediately inserted it in his newspaper as agreed upon. Day after day passed ; the calumnies which Sheridan had invented against himself got circulation, and were in everybody's mouths ; and day after day did Mr. Woodfall wait for the refutation which was to set all to rights and expose the fallacy of the accusations ; but, strange to say, Sheridan never could prevail upon himself to take the trouble to write one line in his own vindication ; and the libels which he invented against himself remain to this hour wholly uncontradicted. I was well acquainted with Mr. Woodfall, who declared to me that this was the fact.

" Another instance of his neglect for his own interest came (amongst many others) to my knowledge. He had a particular desire to have an audience of His late Majesty, who was then at Windsor ; it was on some point which he wished to carry for the good of the theatre. He mentioned it to His present Majesty, who, with the kindness which on every occasion he showed him, did him the honour to say that he would take him to Windsor himself, and appointed him to be at Carlton House to set off with His Royal Highness precisely at eleven o'clock. He called upon me and said, ' My dear Mic, I am going to Windsor with the Prince the day after to-morrow ; I must be with him at eleven o'clock in the morning to a moment, and to be in readiness at that early hour you must give me a bed at your house ;[1] I shall then only have to cross the way to Carlton House and be punctual to the appointment of His Royal Highness.'

" I had no bed to offer him but my own, which I ordered to be got in readiness for him ; and he, with his brother-in-law, Charles Ward, came to dinner with me. Amongst other things at table there was a roast neck of mutton, which was sent away untouched. As the servant was taking it out of the room I observed, ' There goes a dinner fit for a king ' ; alluding to His late Majesty's known partiality for that particular dish.

" The next morning I went out of town to dine and sleep purposely to accommodate Mr. Sheridan with my bed ; and got home again about four o'clock in the afternoon of the following day, when I was told by my servant that Mr. Sheridan was up-stairs still fast asleep ; that he had been sent for several times from Carlton House, but nothing could prevail upon him to get up.

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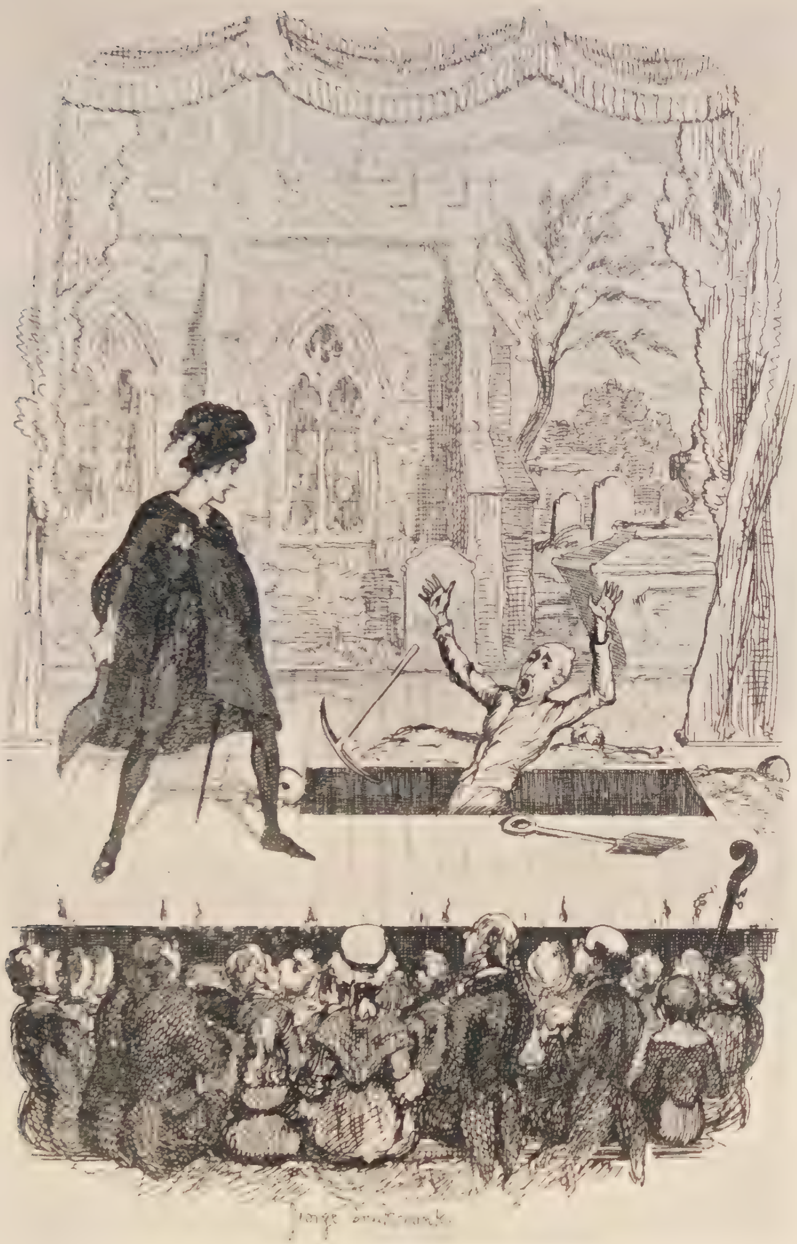
[1] 4, Pall Mall. Sheridan lived at 9, George Street, Hanover Square, in 1802. In 1812 he was at 6, Grosvenor Square.

" It appears that in about an hour after I quitted town he called at the Saloon, and told my servant-maid that ' he knew she had a dinner fit for a king in the house, a cold roast neck of mutton,' and asked her if she had any wine. She told him there were in a closet five bottles of port, two of Madeira, and one of brandy, the whole of which I found that he, Richardson, and Charles Ward, after eating the neck of mutton for dinner, had consumed : on hearing this, it was easy to account for his drowsiness in the morning. He was not able to raise his head from his pillow, nor did he get out of bed until seven o'clock, when he had some dinner.

" Kemble came to him in the evening, and they again drank very deep, and I never saw Mr. Sheridan in better spirits. Kemble was complaining of want of novelty at Drury Lane Theatre ; and that as manager he felt uneasy at lack of it. ' My dear Kemble,' said Mr. Sheridan, ' don't talk of grievances now.' But Kemble still kept on saying, ' Indeed, we must seek for novelty, or the theatre will sink ; novelty, and novelty alone, can prop it.' ' Then,' replied Sheridan with a smile, ' if you want novelty, act *Hamlet*, and have music played between your pauses.' Kemble, however he might have felt the sarcasm, did not appear to take it in bad part. What made the joke tell at the time was this : a few nights previous, while Kemble was acting *Hamlet*, a gentleman came to the pit door and tendered half-price. The money-taker told him that the third act was only then begun. The gentleman, looking at his watch, said, ' It must be impossible, for that it was half-past nine o'clock.' ' That is very true, Sir,' replied the money-taker ; ' but recollect, Mr. Kemble plays *Hamlet* to-night.' "

Kemble had a saving grace of humour despite his stately pomposity on the stage, for even after his just annoyance with the fooleries of the quaint actor, Jew Davis, who was playing the First Grave-digger to his Hamlet (as related in the *Memoirs of Joseph Grimaldi*), and turned the scene into an uproarious farce, he received the culprit with civility and a forgiving sense of his former ill-timed jest. His brother, Stephen Kemble, also had this sense of humour at his own expense, as is evident from


George Cruikshank

JOHN PHILIP KEMBLE AS HAMLET
with Jew Davis playing the fool as the First Grave-digger

the story which Mrs. Crouch used to call *The Giant and the Dwarf*, it being premised that Stephen Kemble was a very big man and played such parts as Othello and Falstaff :

" One day, when the conversation turned on supernatural appearances in the night, when Mr. S. Kemble happened to be present at Mr. Phillips's, he said that he had once felt himself extremely surprised by a nocturnal visitor, when he lay at an inn. It was about three in the morning, and, being summer, light enough to distinguish objects, when he heard something moving in his chamber, and presently beheld at the side of his bed a dwarf, singularly habited, who gazed in equal astonishment at him : but as small objects are not so terrific as large ones, Mr. S. Kemble recovered first from his surprise, and raising himself up in the bed, asked the little figure what he was, and what he wanted in his room. The dwarf, assuming courage, replied, ' I am, as you may perceive, Sir, a dwarf, come to be shown at the fair to-morrow. I have mistaken the chamber, no doubt, and was frightened when I saw you, who are a giant come, I suppose, to be shown for a sight at the fair like myself.' Mr. S. Kemble told this little story with great humour."

In the search for " novelty," Sheridan and Kemble blundered badly when they decided to produce in 1796 what was at first believed to be a newly discovered play by Shakspere, *Vortigern and Rowena*, but was, in reality, a forgery by the clever nineteen-years-old boy, William Henry Ireland. Kemble, though at first he had been deceived, was convinced of the spuriousness of the play's attribution before production. Nevertheless, he went on with the matter, though Mrs. Siddons resigned her part. Mrs. Jordan, however, appeared with him. Kemble chose April 1st as the date of the production, but Mr. Ireland protested at the implication, and the first performance took place on the next night. But Kemble throughout guyed the play, and the audience, aware of his opinion of *Vortigern*, gave full support to the farce. At length Kemble came to the speech containing the words :

And when this solemn mockery is o'er,
With icy hands thou tak'st him by the feet,
And upward so ; till thou dost reach the heart,
And wrap him in the cloak of 'lasting night.

" No sooner was the above line uttered in the most sepulchral tone of voice possible, and accompanied with that peculiar emphasis which, on a subsequent occasion, so justly rendered Mr. Kemble the object of criticism, than the most discordant howl echoed from the pit that ever assailed the organs of hearing. After the lapse of ten minutes the clamour subsided, when Mr. Kemble, having again obtained a hearing, instead of proceeding with the speech at the ensuing line, very politely, and in order to amuse the audience still more, re-delivered the very line above quoted with even more solemn grimace than he had in the first instance displayed. . . . The crowd and the rush for admittance were almost unprecedented. I do not think that twenty females were in the pit, such was the eagerness to obtain admission."[1]

Things were not going well at Drury Lane at this period owing to Sheridan's carelessness and amazing indifference to the usual codes of finance and business ; and by 1802 the theatre was in a very bad way. The actors' salaries were greatly in arrears, and, to add to the troubles of the players, there were legal actions. Kelly relates :

" Mr. Grubb, [2] one of the proprietors, and Messrs. Hammersley, applied to the Lord Chancellor, praying that their demands on the theatre, with those of the old and new renters, might be taken out of the receipts before the performers were paid. Sheridan resisted this ; and the actors, one and all, threatened to strike if such an order were granted. The case came on before the Lord Chancellor. Sheridan pleaded his own cause against the whole Chancery bar, which was retained on the other side. In a most elaborate and eloquent speech, he stated the embarrassments of the theatre, the necessity of paying the performers, as no work could go on without workmen ; if they withdrew their services, the doors must be closed, the property fall to pieces, and general ruin ensue. From his eloquent tongue persuasion flowed, and won the high debate. The consequence was that the performers gained the day, and an order was granted that they should be the first persons paid. The Lord Chancellor,[1] after passing a high eulogium on Sheridan, quoted, in addressing him (as I was told, for I was not near enough to hear it), Dr. Johnson's last lines in *The Life of Savage*: 'Negligence and irregularity, long continued, make knowledge useless, wit ridiculous, and genius contemptible.'

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[1] W. H. Ireland and this production of his *Vortigern* at Drury Lane form the subject of James Payn's novel, *The Talk of the Town* (1885).

[2] John Grubb (1751–1812), of Horsendon House, Bucks. He lost a very large sum of money as the result of his theatrical ventures with Sheridan at Drury Lane. A fine portrait of John Grubb, as a young man, by Gainsborough, is in the possession of his great-grandson, Mr. Eustace Grubbe, of Southwold, Suffolk. In view of his prominent connection with the theatre, John Grubb's name was rather unfortunately used for that of a character in a comedy by George Colman the younger, entitled *Ways and Means, or a Trip to Dover*, produced in the summer of 1788. " The Epilogue, alluding to the scandal and criticisms of newspapers, was delivered with appropriate humour by Mr. Palmer, as John Grub, the editor of a paper." John Grubb was an excellent amateur actor. He played Sir Toby Belch in a production of *Twelfth Night* in January, 1796, at Brandenburgh House, Hammersmith, the residence of the Margravine of Anspach (Lady Craven), when the hostess was Viola, and her son, Keppel Craven, the Sebastian ; Sir Andrew Aguecheek was taken by Henry Angelo and the Clown by Captain Morris, the London Laureate (see *ante*, p. 20).

" I thought at the time that the quotation might have been spared, and that it was perhaps harsh to speak the truth at all times. However, he left the Court amidst the loud congratulations and admiration of his friends, and the envy and discomfiture of his enemies. He walked with me to my house in Pall Mall, where he dined, and told me that he should have spoken better if I had not kept him up so late the night before. I was so happy and delighted that I could not help reminding him of Mr. Pitt's eulogium on him during Warren Hastings's trial. That illustrious statesman designated Mr. Sheridan's speech, on that occasion, as ' an astonishing effort of eloquence, wit, and argument united ; surpassing all the eloquence of ancient and modern times, and possessing everything that genius and art could furnish to agitate and controul the human mind.' For although Mr. Sheridan was a follower of Mr. Fox in politics, Mr. Pitt had the liberality to pay the above tribute to his talent and genius."

Kelly had several experiences of Sheridan's remarkable manner of dealing with his creditors, particularly when on one occasion he found himself arrested, as Sheridan's manager, for a debt of £350 due on the furnishings for the Opera House. Kelly had been arrested in Liverpool and conveyed to a sponging-house there :

" I sent my servant to London by the mail, with an account of the transaction to Mr. Sheridan, who immediately settled the debt in his own peculiar way. He sent for Henderson, the upholsterer, to his house, and after describing the heinous cruelty he had committed by arresting a man who had nothing to do with the debt, and who was on a professional engagement in the country, expatiated and remonstrated, explained and extenuated, until he had worked so much upon the upholsterer, that in less than half an hour he agreed to exonerate me and my bail, taking instead of such security Mr. Sheridan's bond which, I must say, was extremely correct in the upholsterer. But Mr. Sheridan never did things by halves, and therefore, before the said upholsterer quitted the room, he contrived to borrow £200 of him in addition to the original claim, and he departed, thinking himself highly honoured by Mr. Sheridan's condescension in accepting the loan.

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[1] Lord Eldon.

" I have seen many instances of Mr. Sheridan's power of raising money when pushed hard ; and one among the rest I confess even astonished me. He was once £3,000 in arrear with the performers of the Italian Opera : payment was put off from day to day, and they bore the repeated postponements with Christian patience ; but, at last, even their docility revolted, and finding all the tales of hope flattering, they met and resolved not to perform any longer until they were paid. As manager I accordingly received on the Saturday morning their written declaration that not one of them would appear at night. On getting this I went to Messrs. Morlands' banking house in Pall Mall to request some advances in order to satisfy the performers for the moment, but alas ! my appeal was vain, and the bankers were inexorable ; they, like the singers, were worn out, and assured me with a solemn oath that they would not advance another shilling either to Mr. Sheridan or the concern, for that they were already too deep in arrear themselves.

" This was a poser, and with a heart rather sad I went to Hertford Street, Mayfair, to Mr. Sheridan, who at that time had not risen. Having sent word up of the urgency of my business, after keeping me waiting rather more than two hours in the greatest anxiety, he came out of his bedroom. I told him unless he could raise £3,000 the theatre must be shut up, and he, and all belonging to the establishment be disgraced. ' Three thousand pounds, Kelly ! there is no such sum in nature,' said he with all the coolness imaginable, nay, more than I could have imagined a man under such circumstances capable of. ' Are you an admirer of Shakespeare ? ' ' To be sure I am,' said I, ' but what has Shakespeare to do with £3,000 or the Italian singers ? ' ' There is one passage in Shakespeare,' said he, ' which I have always admired particularly, and it is that where Falstaff says, " Master Robert Shallow, I owe you a thousand pounds." " Yes, Sir John," says Shallow, " which I beg you will let me take home with me." " That may not so easy be, Master Robert Shallow," replies Falstaff, and so say I unto thee, Master Mick Kelly, to get three thousand pounds may not so easy be.' ' Then, Sir,' said I, ' there is no alternative but closing the Opera House,' and not quite pleased with his apparent carelessness I was leaving the room, when he bade me stop, ring the bell, and order a hackney-coach. He then sat down and read the newspaper, perfectly at his ease, while I was in an agony of anxiety. When the coach came, he desired me to get into it, and ordered the coachman to drive to Morlands', and to Morlands' we went ; there he got out, and I remained in the carriage in a state of nervous suspense not to be described ; but in less than a quarter of an hour, to my joy and surprise, out he came with £3,000 in bank notes in his hand. By what hocus pocus he got it I never knew, nor can I imagine even at this moment, but certes he brought it to me out of the very house where, an hour or two before, the firm had sworn that they would not advance him another sixpence. He saw by my countenance the emotions of surprise and pleasure his appearance, so provided, had excited, and, laughing, bid me take the money to the treasurer, but to be sure to keep enough out of it to buy a barrel of native oysters, which he would come and roast at night at my house in Suffolk Street.

" At this period (1794) Mr. Sheridan was getting largely in my debt. I, myself, was not keeping out of debt, and my wine bills were very large ; the purple tide flowed by day and night, and I never stopped it, for then I took the DRUNKARD for a GOD ! One day I called upon him and requested he would let me have a little money ; he put me off as usual with promising he would let me have some to-morrow. To-morrow was always his favourite pay-day, but, like the trust-day at a French inn, that morrow never did I see. In the midst of all this he told me how much he was pleased with Tom Welsh (then a boy), and his singing, ' Angels ever bright and fair,' the night before. ' He should be encouraged,' said he; 'go and tell him that in addition to his salary I shall send him a present of £200, and you shall take it to him.' 'Shall I?' said I (making the quotation from *Lionel and Clarissa*). 'I think the borough may be disposed of to a worthier candidate,' but neither Welsh nor I ever got a halfpenny of the money.

"At one time when hard pressed to pay the Opera Orchestra, who were greatly in arrear and had resolved not to perform unless their debt was liquidated, threatening to make an application to the Lord Chamberlain, Mr. Sheridan was roused to make an effort to raise five hundred pounds, which was the immediate sum required. He found a person ready to make an advance for three months, with a proviso that Stephen Storace and myself, who then managed the Opera, should give our joint security for the repayment. Being both of us eager that the concern should not stop, we did so, and he promised faithfully to provide for it. The very day the bill became due, Storace was with me in the morning; we were both *in modo pensieroso*, wondering how we could contrive to get it renewed; when, to our great surprise, Mr. Sheridan entered, laughing, with our acceptance dangling between his fingers, the sight of which changed our *modo pensieroso* to an *allegro vivace;* he put our security into my hands, at which my heart did verily rejoice, and with all sincerity I made use of the quotation, 'For this relief, much thanks.' I mention this to show however general the impression of Mr. Sheridan's want of punctuality in money matters may be, that there is no rule without an exception.

"One of Mr. Sheridan's favourite amusements in his hours of recreation was that of making blunders for me, and relating them to my friends, vouching for the truth of them with the most perfect gravity. One I remember was, that one night when Drury Lane Theatre was crowded to excess in every part, I was peeping through the hole in the stage curtain, and John Kemble, who was standing on the stage near me, asked me how the house looked, and that I replied, 'By Jasus, you can't stick a pin's head in any part of it, it is literally chuck full; but how much fuller will it be to-morrow night when the King comes!' Another of Mr. Sheridan's jests against me was that one day, having walked with him to Kemble's house in Great Russell Street, Bloomsbury, when the streets were very dirty, and having gone up the steps while Mr. Sheridan was scraping the dirt off his shoes, I asked him to scrape also for me while I was knocking at the door for both of us. Of all our poets, Dryden was Mr. Sheridan's favourite ; many a time and oft when sitting over our wine have I heard him quote at great length from him. It was truly a treat to hear him recite poetry ; he had a powerful voice, and nothing, when animated, could surpass the brilliancy of his countenance and the fire of his eye.

" One day Mr. Sheridan laughingly said to me, ' It must be allowed, Kelly, that our countrymen always shew more or less of the *potato* in their brain. Yesterday at about four o'clock in the morning I came out of Brookes's, where I had staid the very last ; and as I was stepping into the carriage I saw some half-dozen Irish chairmen loitering at the door, shivering with cold, waiting for a fare. It was a bitter morning, and I said to one of the poor devils, " Why do you remain here, my good fellow ? " " Please, your honour," replied one of them, " we are waiting to take somebody home." " You may save yourselves the trouble, then," said I, " for I have just come out of the house and there is nobody left in it." " Please, your honour, we know there is nobody in it, but who knows how many may come out ? " It was too cold,' said Mr. Sheridan, ' to argue with them, so I got into my coach and left them.' "

T. J. Dibdin, in his *Reminiscences*, relates several Hibernicisms of this kind which were attributed to Michael Kelly. Thus, when a friend said to him, " You have taken no exercise to-day, Mike," he replied, " Oh, sure, but I made up for it yesterday." Another concerned a harlequin who, missing his flying leap through a window, fell backwards on the stage. " I'm thinking," said Kelly, " it's the fault of those Irish carpenters for making the hole on the other side."

Dibdin also tells a long story concerning Kelly's horror of corpses and how, when on a visit to a famous dissecting surgeon's house, he was led to believe that some smooth white bodies he inadvertently touched in the dusk were those of malefactors destined for the dissector's knife. The corpses were, in fact, plump geese awaiting the oven and the carving-knife.

One of Sheridan's most amusing jokes at Kelly's expense occurred at the production of *The Glorious First of June* at Drury Lane in 1794.[1] It was written and composed in three days, and, as Kelly was very busy composing some songs for the piece, he asked Sheridan, who wrote a good deal of the words of the play for the author, James Cobb, to make his performing part in the operetta as short as possible, with very little to learn in the way of lines. Sheridan promised to carry out his wishes. When the script was received, Kelly found that his part comprised one song, " When in War on the Ocean we meet the Proud Foe," and on his stage entry he had to look earnestly at a cottage in the distance and pronounce the banal words : " There stands my Louisa's cottage ; she must be either in it or out of it." That was his whole part, for the song followed immediately after his solitary and sublime speech, which naturally caused the audience to laugh loudly. Kelly relates : " When the piece was over, Mr. Sheridan came into the green-room, and complimented me on my quickness, and being so perfect in the part which he had taken so much pains to write for me ; which, he said, considering the short time I had to study it, was truly astonishing. He certainly had the laugh against me, and he did not spare me." But Kelly could never take offence at anything done by Sheridan, for whom, despite all faults, he had the sincerest admiration and affection. He continues :

" It would be the height of arrogance and indiscretion in me to descant on or eulogise the public character of Mr. Sheridan ; but I trust that his political life will be handed down to posterity by some able pen, uninfluenced by favour or enmity ; for take him as a statesman, an orator, a dramatist, and a poet united, I fear we shall scarcely ever see his like again. His good qualities were many ; and, after all, the great bane of his life was procrastination ; had it not been for that, what could he not have achieved ! To me, his memory will be ever dear, and ought to be so to all who admire great and splendid talents. Yet he had many enemies ; some of whom, to my knowledge, his former bounty fed. But alas ! to use the language of our great bard :

The evil that men do lives after them ;
The good is oft interred with their bones.

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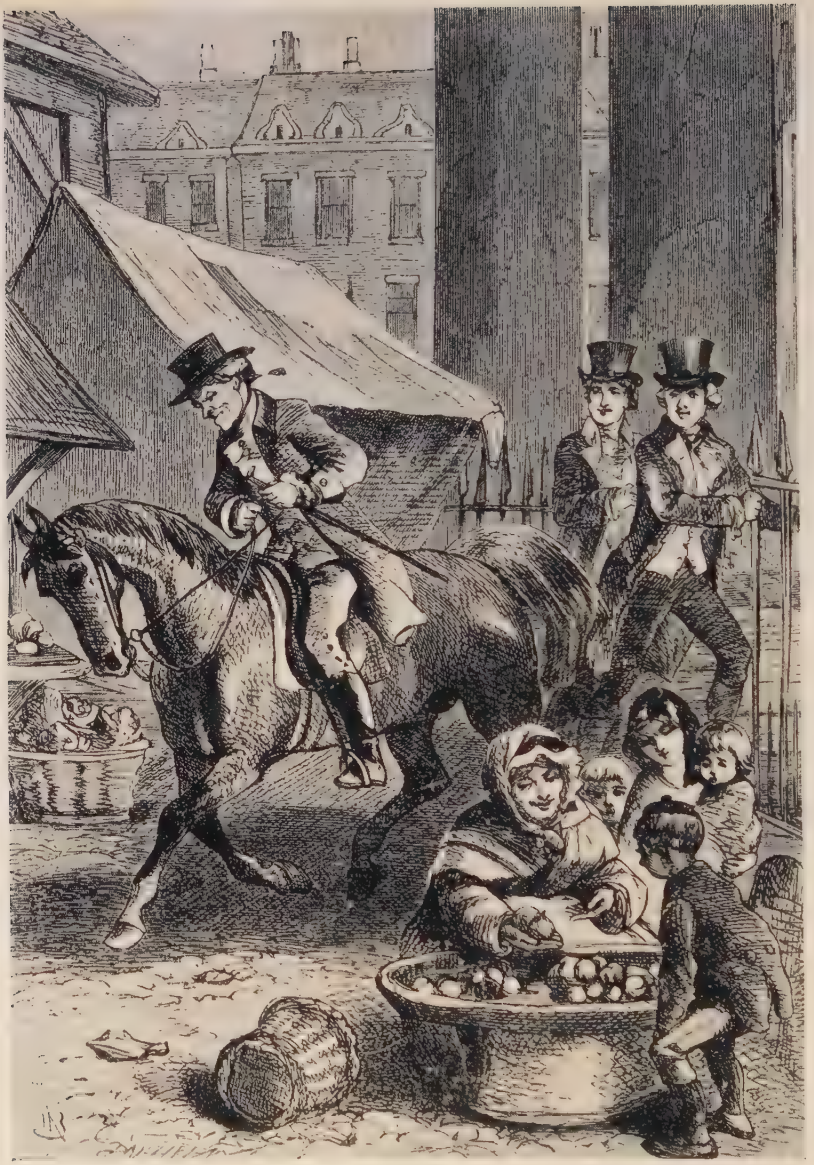
[1] See *ante*, pp. 217–218.



SHERIDAN, KELLY, AND THE LAWYER

From the drawing by Phiz in "The Wits and Beaux of Society," published by Messrs. Routledge

Much good remains upon authentic record relative to Mr. Sheridan which even his greatest enemies could never deny. Some of the stories which exist against him, however, have a vast deal of humour in them, and one which has often been told I think worth inserting, because having been an eye-witness of the circumstance, I am enabled to show the very 'head and front of his offending.'

" We were one day in earnest conversation close to the gate of the path, which was then open to the public, leading across the churchyard of St. Paul's, Covent Garden, from King Street to Henrietta Street, when Mr. Holloway, who was a creditor of Sheridan's to a considerable amount, came up to us on horseback, and accosted Sheridan in a tone of something more like anger than sorrow, and complained that he never could get admittance when he called, vowing vengeance against the infernal Swiss Monsieur François if he did not let him in the next time he went to Hertford Street. Holloway was really in a passion. Sheridan knew that he was vain of his judgement in horse-flesh, and without taking any notice of the violence of his manner, burst into an exclamation upon the beauty of the horse which he rode ; he struck the right chord. 'Why ! ' said Holloway, 'I think I may say there never was a prettier creature than this. You were speaking to me when I last saw you about a horse for Mrs. Sheridan ; now this would be a treasure for a lady.' 'Does he canter well ? ' said Sheridan. 'Beautifully,' replied Holloway. 'If that's the case, Holloway,' said Sheridan, 'I really should not mind stretching a point for him. Will you have the kindness to let me see his paces ? ' 'To be sure,' said the lawyer ; and putting himself into a graceful attitude he threw his nag into a canter along the market. The moment his back was turned, Sheridan wished me good morning, and went off through the churchyard, where no horse could follow, into Bedford Street, laughing immoderately, as indeed did several standers-by. The only person not entertained by this practical joke was Mr. Holloway himself.[1]

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[1] When this story was retold in *The Wits and Beaux of Society*, by Grace and Philip Wharton, it was illustrated by Phiz in a drawing which is further evidence of his habit of illustrating a scene from a book without paying any particular attention to the details given in the text. Thus, in this plate of "Sheridan and the Lawyer," Phiz has placed the episode in Covent Garden Market, with Sheridan

"Another story of him I shall give because it is very little known, if known at all. Mr. Harris, the late proprietor of Covent Garden, who had a great regard for Sheridan, had at different times frequent occasions to meet him on business, and made appointment after appointment with him, not one of which Sheridan ever kept. At length, Mr. Harris, wearied out, begged his friend, Mr. Palmer, of Bath, to see Mr. Sheridan, and tell him that unless he kept the next appointment made for their meeting, all acquaintance between them must end for ever. Sheridan expressed great sorrow for what had been in fact inevitable, and fixed one o'clock the next day to call upon Mr. Harris at the theatre. At about three he actually made his appearance in Hart Street, where he met Mr. Tregent, the celebrated French watchmaker, who was extremely theatrical, and had been the intimate friend of Garrick. Sheridan told him that he was on his way to call upon Harris. 'I have just left him,' said Tregent, 'in a violent passion, having waited for you ever since one o'clock.' 'What have *you* been doing at the theatre?' said Sheridan. 'Why,' replied Tregent, 'Harris is going to make Bate Dudley a present of a gold watch, and I have taken him half a dozen in order that he may choose one for that purpose.' 'Indeed,' said Sheridan. They wished each other good day, and parted.

"Mr. Sheridan proceeded to Mr. Harris's room, and when he addressed him it was pretty evident that his want of punctuality had produced the effect which Mr. Tregent described. 'Well, Sir,' said Mr. Harris, 'I have waited at least two hours for you again; I had almost given you up, and if——' 'Stop, my dear Harris,' said Sheridan, interrupting him; 'I assure you these things occur more from my misfortunes than my faults; I declare I thought it was but one o'clock, for it so happens that I have no watch, and to tell you the truth am too poor to buy one; but when the day comes that I can, you will see I shall be as punctual as any other man.' 'Well, then,' said the unsuspecting Harris; 'if that be all, you shall not long want a watch, for here' (opening a drawer) 'are half a dozen of Tregent's best; choose any one you like, and do me the favour of accepting it.' Sheridan affected the

entering a gate leading on the great portico at the east end of St. Paul's Church, whereas in Kelly's anecdote it is particularly stated that the episode took place near the path across the churchyard from King Street to Henrietta Street, on the west side of the church, and that Sheridan thus escaped into Bedford Street.

greatest surprise at the appearance of the watches ; but did as he was bid, and selected certainly not the worst for the *cadeau*. A punster, in return for Sheridan's hatred of puns, would certainly have made a joke of his affection for watches, because they go *tick* ; for myself, I have too much respect for Mr. Sheridan's memory to give way to such a propensity.

" Mr. Sheridan was extremely attached to Mr. Richardson ;[1] and when Mrs. Sheridan was at Bognor he used to take Richardson down with him on visits to her. One of these visits Sheridan once described to me with infinite humour, and although I fear it is impossible to impart literally the spirit which he practically infused into it when relating it, I give it as I remember it. Richardson had set his mind upon going down to Bognor with Mr. Sheridan on one particular occasion because it happened that Lord Thurlow, with whom he was on terms of intimacy, was staying there. ' So,' said Richardson, ' nothing can be more delightful ; what with my favourite diversion of sailing, my enjoyment of walking on the sands, the pleasure of arguing with Lord Thurlow, and taking my snuff by the sea side, I shall be in my glory.' ' Well,' said Mr. Sheridan ; ' down he went full of anticipated joys. The first day, in stepping into the boat to go sailing, he tumbled down and sprained his ancle, and was obliged to be carried into his lodgings, which had no view of the sea ; the following morning he sent for a barber to shave him, but there being no professional shaver nearer than Chichester, he was forced to put up with a fisherman who volunteered to officiate, and cut him severely just under his nose, which entirely prevented his taking snuff ; and the same day at breakfast, eating prawns too hastily, he swallowed the head of one, horns and all, which stuck in his throat and produced such pain and inflammation that his medical advisers would not allow him to speak for three days. So, thus,' said Mr. Sheridan, ' ended in four and twenty hours his walking, his sailing, his snuff-taking, and his arguments.'

" Mr. Sheridan, although a delightful companion, was by no means disposed to loquacity—indeed, on the contrary ; but when he spoke he commanded universal attention, and what he said deserved it. His conversation was easy and good-natured, and so strongly characterised by shrewdness and a wit peculiarly his own, that it would be hard indeed to find his equal as a companion. That he had his failings who will deny, but then, who amongst us has not? One thing I will safely affirm, that he was as great an enemy to himself as to anybody else.

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[1] Joseph Richardson, M.P. See later, p. 302.

"One evening that their late Majesties honoured Drury Lane Theatre with their presence, the play, by royal command, was *The School for Scandal.* When Mr. Sheridan was in attendance to light Their Majesties to their carriage, the King said to him, 'I am much pleased with your comedy of *The School for Scandal*, but I am still more so with your play of *The Rivals*. That is my favourite, and I will never give it up.' Her Majesty at the same time said, 'When, Mr. Sheridan, shall we have another play from your masterly pen?' He replied that he was writing a comedy which he expected very shortly to finish.

"I was told of this, and the next day, walking with him along Piccadilly, I asked him if he had told the Queen that he was writing a play? He said he had, and that he actually was about one. 'Not you,' said I to him, 'you will never write again; you are afraid to write.' He fixed his penetrating eye on me, and said, 'Of whom am I afraid?' I said, 'You are afraid of the author of *The School for Scandal.*' I believe, at the time I made the remark, he thought my conjecture was right.

"One evening after we had dined together, I was telling him that I was placed in a dilemma by a wine merchant from Hockheim, who had been in London to receive orders for the sale of Hock. I had commissioned him (as he offered me the wine at a cheap rate) to send me six dozen. Instead of six dozen, he had sent me sixteen. I was observing that it was a greater quantity than I could afford to keep, and expressed a wish to sell part of it. 'My dear Kelly,' said Mr. Sheridan, 'I would take it off your hands with all my heart, but I have not the money to pay for it. I will, however, give you an inscription to place over the door of your Saloon: Write over it, Michael Kelly, composer of wines and importer of music.'[1] I thanked him, and said, 'I will take the hint, sir, and be a composer of all wines except old Sherry, for that is so notorious for its intoxicating and pernicious qualities, that I should be afraid of poisoning my customers with it.'

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[1] It was a jesting charge against Kelly that his musical compositions were often indebted to the works of the Continental composers he had been familiar with in Italy and Austria. But Kelly put up a good defence; and when even his famous March in *Blue Beard* was cited by his detractors as a borrowed melody from Mr. Eley, the German Master of the King's Regiment of Guards, Kelly

"The above story has been told in many ways, but as I have written it here is the fact. He owned I had given him a Roland for his Oliver, and very often used to speak of it in company. . . .

"Everybody knows that during the short administration of Mr. Fox's party, Mr. Sheridan held the office of Treasurer of the Navy, to which office, as everybody also knows, a handsome residence is attached. It was during his brief authority in this situation that he gave a splendid fête, to which not only the Ministers and a long list of nobility were invited, but which it was understood His Royal Highness the Prince of Wales, His present Most Gracious Majesty, would honour with his presence: a ball and supper followed the dinner. Morelli, Rovedino, and the Opera company appeared in masks, and sang complimentary verses to the Prince, which Pananti wrote and I composed. The music in *Macbeth* was then performed, and, in short, nothing could surpass the gaiety and splendour of the entertainment, which went off as well as was anticipated.

"But previous to the great consummation of all the hopes and wishes of the donor I happened to call at Somerset House about half-past five, and there I found the brilliant, highly-gifted Sheridan, the star of his party and Treasurer of the Navy, in an agony of despair. What was the cause: had any accident occurred? Bad news from the Continent? Was the Ministry tottering? In short, what was it that agitated so deeply a man of Sheridan's nerve and intellect, and temporary official importance? He had just discovered that there was not a bit of cheese in the house, not even a paring; what was to be done? Sunday, all the shops shut; without cheese, his dinner would be incomplete. I told him I thought some of the Italians would be prevailed upon to open their doors and supply him; and off we went together in a hackney-coach, cheese-hunting, at six o'clock on a Sunday afternoon, the dinner-hour being

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obtained from Eley a letter certifying that he had merely scored for wind instruments the melody supplied to him by Kelly (see *Reminiscences*, vol. ii., pp. 147–9). When he used the music of another, Kelly seems generally to have mentioned the source, as in the case of Martini's "Pace, o caro mio sposo," from *La Cosa Rara* (see *ante*, p. 154).

seven, and His Royal Highness the Prince expected. After a severe run of more than an hour we prevailed upon a sinner in Jermyn Street to sell us some of the indispensable article, and got back just in time for mine host to dress to receive his company. I forget now who paid for the cheese, but the rest of the story I well remember, and have thought worth recording.

"Superstition often takes possession of the strongest minds. A more powerful instance of the truth of this cannot be cited than that of Mr. Sheridan. No mortal ever was more superstitious than he, as I can aver from my own knowledge. No power could prevail upon him to commence any business or set out upon a journey on a Friday, nor would he allow, if he possibly could avoid it, a piece to be produced at his theatre on a Friday night. It is a well-known fact (which he never denied) that when Tom Sheridan[1] was under the tuition of Dr. Parr,[2] in Warwickshire, his father dreamt that he fell from a tree in an orchard, and broke his neck. He took alarm, and sent for his boy to London instanter. The Doctor obeyed the mandate, and brought his pupil to town, and I had the pleasure to meet him at Mr. Sheridan's at dinner. I thought him (though an oddity) very clever and communicative; he was a determined smoker, and on that day not a little of a soaker; he drank a great deal of wine, to say nothing of a copious exhibition of hollands and water afterwards. I remember when he was asked whom he considered the first Greek scholar in Europe he answered, 'The first Greek scholar living is Porson, the third is Dr. Burney, I leave you to guess who is the second.'

"Tom Sheridan did not 'ape his sire' in all things, for whenever he made an appointment he was punctuality personified. In every transaction I had with him I always found him uniformly correct, nor did he unfrequently lament his father's indolence and want of regularity, although he had (indeed naturally) a high veneration for his talents. Tom Sheridan had a good voice and true taste for music, which, added to his intellectual qualities and superior accomplishments, caused his society to be sought with the greatest avidity. The two Sheridans were supping with me one night after the opera at a period when Tom expected to get into Parliament. 'I think, father,' said he, 'that many men who are called great patriots in the House of Commons are great humbugs. For my own part, if I get into Parliament, I will pledge myself to no party, but write upon my forehead in legible characters, "To be let."' 'And under that, Tom,' said his father, write "Unfurnished."' Tom took the joke, but was even with him on another occasion.

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[1] Tom Sheridan (1775–1817) at this time was manager for the Drury Lane Company when performing at the Lyceum Theatre; he was later Colonial Treasurer at the Cape of Good Hope. He was the father of the three famous and beautiful sisters, Mrs. Norton, Lady Dufferin, and the Duchess of Somerset. It is of interest to remember that Sheridan Le Fanu, the Master of Mystery Novels, was the grand-nephew of Richard Brinsley Sheridan, whose sister, Alicia Sheridan, married Joseph Le Fanu, the novelist being their grandson.

[2] Samuel Parr (1747–1825), after various masterships at Harrow, Stanmore, Colchester, and Norwich, settled at Hatton, in Warwickshire, in 1785, where he took private pupils in addition to holding the perpetual curacy of the place. He lived there for the remainder of his life, building a library to contain his ten thousand volumes. Richard Brinsley Sheridan was a pupil at Harrow when Parr was a young master there.

"Mr. Sheridan had a cottage about half a mile from Hounslow Heath. Tom, being very short of cash, asked his father to let him have some. 'Money I have none,' was the reply. 'Be the consequence what it may, money I must have,' said Tom. 'If that is the case, my dear Tom,' said his affectionate parent, 'you will find a case of loaded pistols upstairs, and a horse ready saddled in the stable; the night is dark, and you are within a half a mile of Hounslow Heath.' 'I understand what you mean,' said Tom, 'but I tried that last night. I unluckily stopped Peake, your treasurer, who told me that you had been beforehand with him, and had robbed him of every sixpence he had in the world.'[1]

"It is curious, after knowing such stories and remembering the general habits and pursuits of Mr. Sheridan, to look at the effusions of his muse in which he privately vented his feelings. One day, waiting at his house, I saw under the table half a sheet of apparently waste paper; on examining it, I found it was a ballad, in Mr. Sheridan's handwriting; I brought it away with me, and have it now in my possession. On my return home the words seemed to me beautiful, and I set them to music. It is, of all my songs, my greatest favourite, as the poetry always brings to my mind the mournful recollection of past happy days. It was also a great favourite with Mr. Sheridan, and often has he made me sing it to him. I here insert it :

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[1] Another story told of Sheridan and his son is that, when the youth was proposing to marry unwisely, Sheridan said, "Tom, if you marry that girl, I'll cut you off with a shilling." "Then you'll have to borrow it," replied Tom.

1

“ *No more shall the spring my lost pleasure restore,*
Uncheer'd, I still wander alone,
And, sunk in dejection, for ever deplore
The sweets of the days that are gone.
While the sun as it rises, to others shines bright,
I think how it formerly shone ;
While others cull blossoms, I find but a blight,
And sigh for the days that are gone.

2

“ *I stray where the dew falls, through moon-lighted groves,*
And list to the nightingale's song,
Her plaints still remind me of long banish'd joys,
And the sweets of the days that are gone.
Each dew-drop that steals from the dark eye of night,
Is a tear for the bliss that is flown ;
While others cull blossoms, I find but a blight,
And sigh for the days that are gone.”

Sheridan was deeply affected by the death of his lovely and accomplished wife. Kelly relates : “ I never beheld more poignant grief than Mr. Sheridan felt for the loss of his beloved wife ; and although the world, which knew him only as a public man, will perhaps scarcely credit the fact, I have seen him, night after night, sit and cry like a child, while I sang to him, at his desire, a pathetic little song of my composition, ‘ They Bore Her to Her Grassy Grave.’ ”

No doubt Sheridan suffered much remorse at the time of his wife's death if the scandalous stories related by Lord Glenbervie are true : “ Miss Hayman once passed two months in the same house with the first Mrs. Sheridan. . . . They contracted a great intimacy, and during the time they were together Mrs. Sheridan told her the whole history of her life, and among other things this very extraordinary circumstance : that Sheridan had obliged her to grant the last favour to the Prince of Wales, whom she said she detested, in consideration of his receiving £20,000 from the Prince. Miss Hayman's veracity is unquestionable, and one cannot imagine any motive Mrs. Sheridan could have for fabricating such a story. . . . It has long been thought very unaccountable that Sheridan, who could have inherited nothing from his family, and never had any known accession of fortune but the £3,000 damages which his wife recovered from Mr. Langton a short time before he married her for a breach of promise of marriage, could have lived for years before the resources from the treasury of Drury Lane were opened to him in the manner he did, a house in town, an equipage, frequent entertainments, and the train of a man possessed of some thousands a year. The £20,000 may serve to explain this enigma. When Mrs. Sheridan was in her last illness, though she acknowledged to him that a child she had then lately borne was Lord Edward FitzGerald's, her husband attended her to Bristol, and till her death, with the greatest tenderness, avowing that whatever ill conduct she had been guilty of, he had been the cause of it. He owned or more properly adopted the child, which, however, did not long outlive its mother."

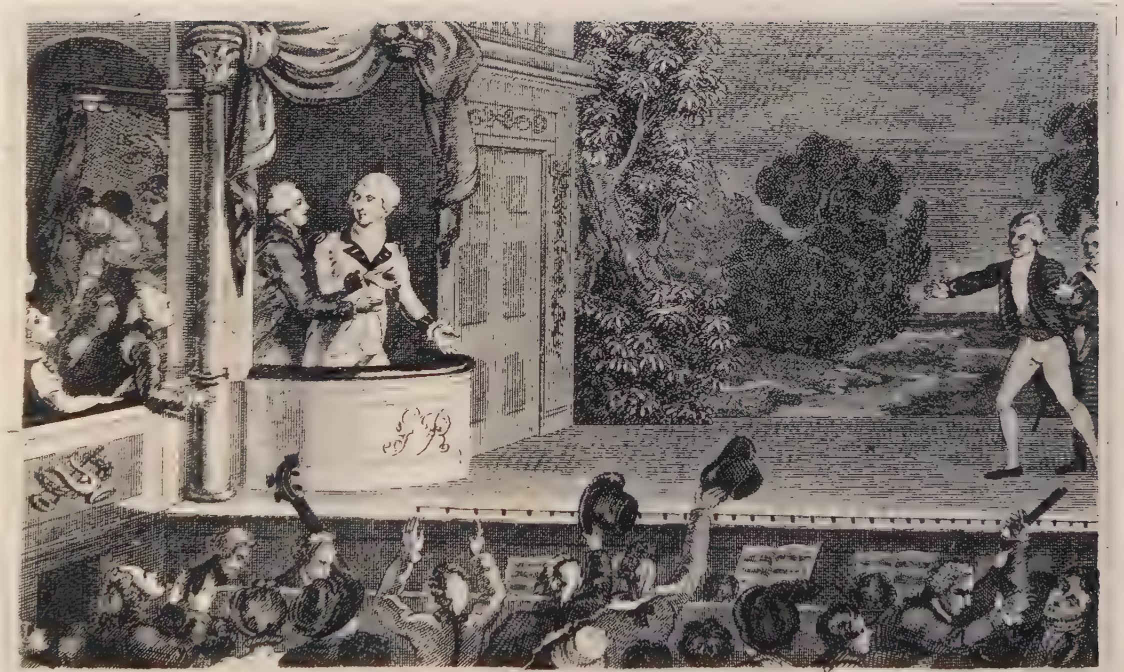
Kelly continues : " I once had the satisfaction of singing a duet with Mrs. Sheridan, at her house in Bruton Street ; her voice, taste, and judgment united to make her the *rara avis* of her day. The last time I beheld her heavenly countenance was at Bristol Hot Wells, where she went for the benefit of her health, having been attacked with a severe pulmonary complaint, which baffled every effort of art to overcome it. She was, indeed, what John Wilkes said of her, the most beautiful flower that ever grew in Nature's garden ; she breathed her last in the year 1792, in the thirty-eighth year of her age ; and was buried by the side of her sister, Mrs. Tickell, in the cathedral church of Wells. Her mother, a kind, friendly woman, and in her youth reckoned beautiful, was a native of Wells. Miss Maria Linley, her sister, a delightful singer, died of a brain fever in her grandfather's house at Bath. After one of the severest paroxysms of the dreadful complaint, she suddenly rose up in her bed, and began the song of ' I know that My Redeemer Liveth,' in as full and clear a tone as when in perfect health. This extraordinary circumstance may be depended upon, as my friend, Mr. William Linley, her brother, stated the fact to me."

Like many other disconsolate widowers, Sheridan married again. Three years after the death of his wife Elizabeth, he wedded Miss Ogle, daughter of the Dean of Winchester, who brought him £5,000, and as he had been obliged to raise £15,000 (by selling Drury Lane shares to that amount) as a marriage settlement for his wife, he was for a time in comfort, until debts and drink and duns dragged him into the morass again.

To follow the success of *Pizarro*, Sheridan and Kelly put on at Drury Lane in February, 1800, another piece adapted from Kotzebue. It was translated by Papendick, a German Page-in-Waiting to Queen Charlotte, and, with music composed by Kelly, it was produced with the title *Of Age To-Morrow.* Jack Bannister as a hairdresser was excellent, for he had, in youth, served seven years as an apprentice to this trade, and wielded the comb, curling-tongs, and powder-puff with all his early proficiency. Wewitzer and Suett also caused much laughter in this farce, and a ballad, the words by " Monk " Lewis and the music by Kelly, " No, my love, no," sung by Miss De Camp, became the popular song of the day ; it was upon every pianoforte, and warbled by every ballad-singer in the streets.

The next piece was Joanna Baillie's *De Montfort*, with music by Kelly, produced on April 29th, 1800. Although Kemble and Mrs. Siddons took every step to ensure success, and the scenery was magnificent—the cathedral scene, painted by Capon, in particular—the piece did not appeal to the public taste, and only ran for a few nights.

May 15th, 1800, was a memorable date for King George III, for on that day he was twice in peril of his life, and, curiously enough, Kelly witnessed both his escapes. In the morning he went to Hyde Park to see the King review the Grenadier battalion of his Foot Guards. In firing a volley, one of the shots struck a man named Ongley, a clerk in the Navy Office, who was standing only twenty-three feet away from the King. He was wounded in the thigh, and the curious aspect of the matter was that, on an examination of the Guards' cartouch-boxes, only blank cartridges were found. That same evening the King and his family visited Drury Lane Theatre, and what happened then is


W. M. Craig del.
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15 May 1800
Magnanimous conduct of the King in Drury Lane Theatre when fired at by Hatfield

THE ATTEMPTED ASSASSINATION OF GEORGE THE THIRD, MAY 15TH, 1800

The figure on the stage is presumably Kelly best described in the words of Kelly, who was a near spectator of the exciting scene:

"I was standing at the stage-door, opposite the Royal box, to see His Majesty. The moment he entered the box, a man in the pit, next the orchestra, on the right-hand side, stood up on the bench, and discharged a pistol at our august monarch as he came to the front of the box. Never shall I forget His Majesty's coolness: the whole audience was in an uproar. The King, on hearing the report of the pistol, retired a pace or two, stopped, and stood firmly for an instant or two; then came forward to the very front of the box, put his opera-glass to his eye, and looked round the house without the smallest appearance of alarm or discomposure. The late Marquis of Salisbury,[1] then Lord Chamberlain, was behind His Majesty, in attendance in the box; and, on hearing the report of the pistol, fearing some further attack might follow, respectfully requested His Majesty would retire from the box into the adjoining room. His Majesty's reply to him was, 'Sir, you discompose me as well as yourself: I shall not stir one step.' The Queen and Princesses then entered the box. On ascending the staircase, the Queen asked Mr. Sheridan what all the noise and uproar was about? He replied, it arose from some boys who were firing off squibs.[2] Hadfield, the ruffian who committed the crime, was seized by the performers in the orchestra, and dragged over its spikes into the music-room, which was under the stage. The audience from all parts vociferating, 'Bring forward the assassin, bring him on the stage—show him, show him!'

"I was at that moment on the stage. The Queen called me to her, and asked if the man was in custody; I told Her Majesty that he was secured. I then came forward and addressed the audience, assuring them that the culprit was in safe custody, undergoing an examination by His Royal Highness the Duke of York, Mr. Sheridan, and Sir William Addington ; but, with the immense crowds about the doors, and under the stage, in the confusion he might possibly escape should they insist on his being brought forward. This appeal produced tranquillity. ‘ God Save the King ’ was then called for, and received with shouts of applause, waving of hats, etc. During the whole of the play the Queen and Princesses were absorbed in tears : it was a sight never to be forgotten by those present. At the end of the play, ‘ God Save the King ’ was again demanded by the whole house ; and while we were singing it, a paper was sent to me by Mr. Sheridan, with a verse which he had written on the spur of the moment. It was handed to me by Mrs. Jordan, and I sang it, although with an agitated voice. It was as follows :

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[1] The first Marquis of Salisbury (1748–1823). His wife, Mary (daughter of the first Marquis of Downshire) was burned to death in 1835, when the west wing of Hatfield House was destroyed by fire.

[2] A quaint contemporary illustration of Hadfield shooting at the King shows the Queen about to enter the box, which would seem to be an error if Kelly is correct in stating that the shot was fired as the Queen was ascending the staircase. The picture also shows one of the Princesses about to faint. As a matter of fact, the Princesses Augusta, Sophia, and Mary all fainted (Mary twice), the Princess Elizabeth alone preserving her fortitude; she tended her sisters with smelling salts and cold water. The Queen, though very pale, remained cool and collected.

‘ *From every latent foe,*
From the assassin's blow,
God Save the King.
O'er him Thine arm extend,
For Britain's sake defend
Our father, prince, and friend,
God Save the King.’

This stanza was three times repeated, with the most rapturous approbation. His Royal Highness the Prince of Wales was assisting in the music-room at the examination, and evinced the most anxious solicitude and joy for the safety of his royal and august father. The play was Cibber's comedy, *She Would, and She Would Not.* Never was a piece so hurried over, for the performers were all in the greatest agitation and confusion. When it concluded, His Majesty left the theatre amidst the shouts of the audience within and the enthusiastic cheers of the populace without. I remember, perfectly well, I had dined that day with Mr. Frederick Walsh, in Fludyer Street, with Lord Guilford, Sir Charles Bampfylde, and Mr. Taylor of the Opera House. I was obliged to leave the table almost as soon as we sat down, being under the necessity of going to the theatre to sing in ‘ God Save the King.’ Mr. Taylor (who was a great joker) said, ‘ Mark me, when that fellow returns from the theatre, he will come to us with some marvellous story in his mouth.’ When the performance was over, I returned to Mr. Walsh's, and found the party over their wine. I went into the parlour, and exclaimed that the King had been shot at in the theatre. Mr. Taylor burst into a roar of laughter, saying, ' Did I not tell you that he would come back with some quiz in his mouth ? ' Nor could I for a long time convince them that what I had said was truth ; so naturally improbable did it appear that so good and gracious a monarch should have been exposed to the perils of assassination."

The attempted assassin, James Hadfield, was an ex-soldier and a lunatic. He had ever been distinguished for bravery in the field, and at Roubaix, in 1794, he had fought with the utmost gallantry. He volunteered for a skirmishing party, and was surrounded by the enemy. Fighting desperately, at last he fell with terrible wounds ; his skull was fractured, his cheek slashed off, his arm broken, and his body was so mangled that he was left for dead, and his name reported in the list of killed. But he was not dead. He fell into the hands of the French, and remained a prisoner for over a year. Then he turned up at the barracks of his old regiment at Croydon, to the amazement and joy of his comrades. It soon became apparent, however, that his wounds had deranged his intellect. He had to be placed in a strait-jacket, and finally was discharged from the army as a lunatic in 1796. At the trial for his attack on the King he was adjudged insane, and confined in Bedlam. On two occasions, in 1802, Hadfield managed to escape ; the first time he had got as far as Deal. But he finally died in Bedlam. In commemoration of the King's escape at Drury Lane, Sheridan had silver medals struck, showing Providence protecting the King, in addition to the usual emblems, and the words, " Preserved from Assassination, May 15th, 1800." The whole episode was one of the most exciting events of Kelly's life, and he must have dearly appreciated his own part in the scene when the Queen called to him on the stage from her box for information, and his subsequent address to the audience and his singing of the new impromptu verse of the National Anthem sent to him by Sheridan.

On December 11th, 1800, there was a magnificent revival of Shakspere's *King John* at Drury Lane, with great splendour of dresses and scenic detail. Kemble played the King, and Kelly says, " It was one of his best characters ; his scene with Hubert was great indeed : but what words can describe the magnificent performance of Mrs. Siddons as Lady Constance. By those who have had the good fortune to witness it, I am convinced it can never be forgotten. Charles Kemble's Faulconbridge was a masterpiece." Prince Arthur was played by Kelly's niece, Fanny, then ten years old, who then won a success that will be related in due course in a later volume of this narrative.

In May, 1801, another drama by " Monk " Lewis, with music by Kelly, *Adelmorn the Outlaw*, was produced at Drury Lane ;[1] and on January 22nd of the following year there was played *Urania, or The Illumine*, written by William Spencer, the music composed by his brother, John Spencer, and Kelly, who had met John Spencer in Vienna, when that young man was on his grand tour and astonishing the Austrians as an amateur jockey.[2] There was another reminder for Kelly this year of his early days, for on March 11th, 1802, Drury Lane was closed for the night out of respect to the ground-landlord of the theatre, Francis, Duke of Bedford, whose funeral had taken place that day ; this was the Duke of Bedford Kelly had met at Sir William Hamilton's house in Naples, in 1779, when both were boys.[3]

In October, 1802, Kelly appeared in the burletta of *Midas* at Drury Lane, wherein he enacted the part of Apollo. The music had been arranged by a distinguished amateur, Kane O'Hara

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[1] *Adelmorn the Outlaw* again introduced an effective ghost, that of a murdered man, who appeared from heaven, accompanied by cherubim, to force the villain, Baron Ulric, to confess his crime. After the first performance, Lewis had to moderate his ghost scene and cut out a few offending lines, and also to reduce the three acts to two. Thus mutilated, the play had but little chance of success, and it was only performed ten times. Miss De Camp, Mrs. Mountain, and Suett were in the cast.

[2] See *ante*, p. 116. John Spencer (1767–1831) was the eldest son of Lord Charles Spencer, second son of the third Duke of Marlborough, and his younger brother, William Robert Spencer (1769–1834) was the friend to whom Thomas Moore, in absence, addressed the ode bearing his name :

> *Believe me, Spencer . . . we had nights of that communion free,*
> *That flush of heart, which I have known with thee*
> *So oft, so warmly ; nights of mirth and mind,*
> *Of whims that taught, and follies that refined. . . .*
> *I sigh for England—oh ! these weary feet*
> *Have many a mile to journey, ere we meet.*

Kelly says William Spencer had a particular knowledge of the German and Italian languages, and that he and their mutual friend, William Maddocks, were great lovers and judges of the stage. John Spencer he describes as a " scientific writer and a sound musician."

[3] See *ante*, p. 28.

(1712–82), whom Kelly had met in his youth in the old Dublin days. He had heard O'Hara sing in his own house the songs from *Midas*, which was a burlesque of Italian burletta, and at Drury Lane he based his own performance and singing on his recollections of O'Hara, who was so remarkably tall that he was known among his friends as " St. Patrick's Steeple." He was also the author of *The Golden Pippin* and *Tom Thumb*. He became blind in old age.

The affairs of Drury Lane were now reaching their worst stage ; the finances were hopelessly involved, and John Kemble in 1803 left the theatre and transferred his art to Covent Garden. Sheridan now put on very inferior plays, such as *A House to be Sold* (wherein Kelly had to eat part of a fowl, which he found a difficult task : " I could not get down a morsel ; my embarrassment was a great source of fun to Bannister and Suett, who were both gifted with the accommodating talent of stage feeding ; whoever saw poor Suett as the Lawyer, in *No Song, No Supper*, tucking in his boiled leg of lamb, will be little disposed to question my testimony to that effect ") ; *The Hero of the North*, and *Cinderella, or the Little Glass Slipper*, " A Grand Allegorical Pantomimic Spectacle," for both of which Kelly composed the music, Miss De Camp making a success as Cinderella, presumably the first of the long line of the kitchen heroine to disport herself thus in Drury Lane pantomime.

I fancy *Robinson Crusoe* appeared for the first time in pantomime in January, 1781, at Drury Lane, when, as M. J. Young relates, " the name insured its success. Robinson Crusoe, his goats, his parrot, and his man Friday had long been the familiar friends of youth, and as such they were most warmly received ; the scenery, by Mr. Loutherbourg, was appropriate ; the music was selected, and, like the story, the more pleasant, perhaps, for being familiar, and never did a pantomime give greater satisfaction. It was invented by Mr. Sheridan."

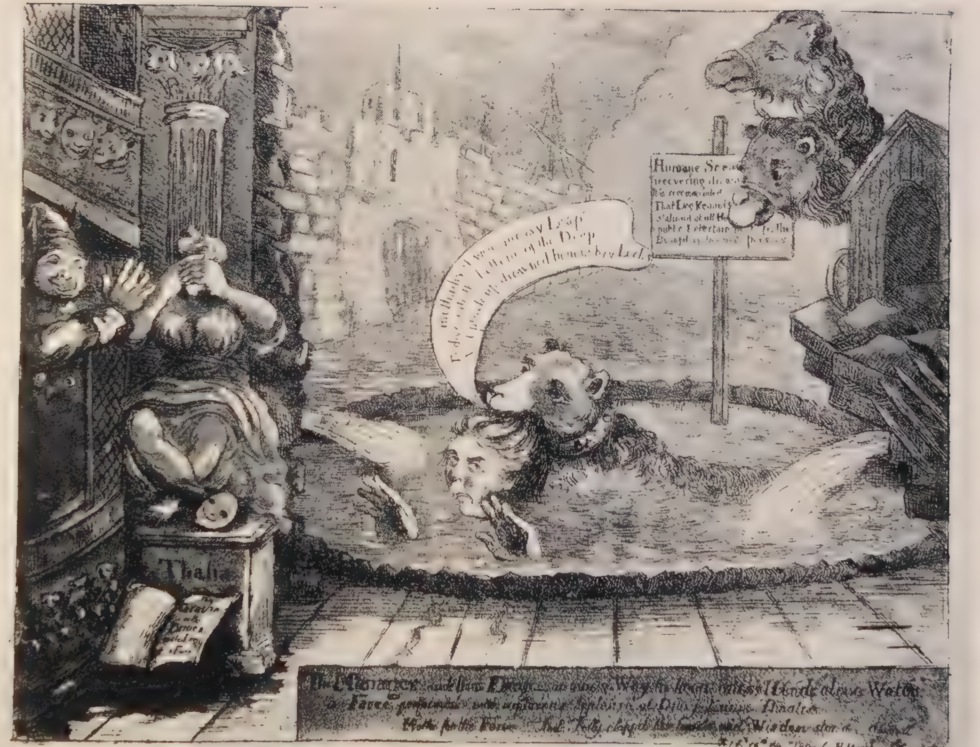
Dick Whittington made his first bow, though not as yet as the title of the pantomime, in January, 1783 : " At the Theatre Royal, Covent Garden, came out also *Lord Mayor's Day, or a Flight from Lapland*, a pantomime, with airs, duets, choruses, and a grand procession of the several companies, with their respective pageants, and the chief magistrates of the City of

London, from A.M. 2855 to A.D. 1566. In this procession, not only the famous Whittington, but his no less famous Cat was introduced; that noted good mouser was brought in lying very comfortably upon a crimson velvet cushion, fringed with gold, to the great delight of the little spectators, who were rejoiced to see an old friend so highly honoured. The pantomime gave great satisfaction to the whole house, and contains such an excellent historical chronicle of city events, agreeably personified, that it might very well be performed annually like the Lord Mayor's Show. The music was composed by Mr. Shield, the pantomime by Mr. O'Keefe."

Aladdin followed six years later, also at Covent Garden Theatre, where in the season of 1789 was produced "the pantomime called *Aladdin, or the Wonderful Lamp*; it possessed both novelty and interest, and had a great run; it was enriched with airs and choruses composed by Mr. Shield. A grand dance, the *Death of Captain Cook*, had also a great run at that time, and was truly affecting as a natural and very interesting story, which sets forth the Captain's humanity in such an advantageous light, that it excites the most heart-felt grief for his death, and renders the dance so completely tragic that tears, fainting, and hysterics have frequently been the consequences which attended the treacherous and fatal stab; the savage left the dagger in his back—his steps falter—it was horrible—and it was *no fiction*—Captain Cook had existed, and had thus treacherously been slain."

Thus it will be seen that Sheridan, the famous German Royal Academician, Philip Loutherbourg (1740–1812), and William Shield (1748–1829) all had a hand in the first pantomimes based on popular nursery stories. William Shield, though now almost forgotten, was a talented man, and highly esteemed by his contemporaries for his light operas, such as *The Flitch of Bacon*, and for his popular songs, *The Wolf* and *The Thorn*. He was originally apprenticed to a boat-builder at South Shields, but turned to his natural vocation, music, and became a member of the orchestra in the theatre at Scarborough. Then to the Italian Opera House in London, and eventually he was composer to Covent Garden Theatre. He was buried in the cloisters of Westminster Abbey.

Finally a performing dog was the chief actor on the boards of


Humane Soc
That Dog Kennels
the Deep
Thalia

The Head is Sheridan: the Dog is a Newfoundland Dog really introduc'd on Drury-Lane Stage to plunge into the Water, & rescue a Child.

CARTOON OF SHERIDAN AND DRURY LANE THEATRE SAVED FROM RUIN BY THE DOG "CARLO" IN "THE CARAVAN," 1803

Drury Lane in succession to Mrs. Siddons and Kemble. This was in *The Caravan, or the Driver and his Dog* (December, 1803), written by the prolific Frederic Reynolds (1764–1841), father of the later editor of *The Keepsake*, Frederic Mansel Reynolds. The play had pretty music by William Reeve, the composer at Astley's. It had a very long run, and brought much money to the treasury, so the later Jeremiahs of the drama who lament that Shakspere will not pay at Drury Lane, while *Rose Marie* and *The Show Boat* will run for years, may take comfort that so it has always been, even in those spacious days of Siddonsian fame. The principal attraction of *The Caravan* was the dog called Carlo, who, when he leaped into a stream of real water and saved a child, received nightly the most tumultuous applause, for " it was truly astonishing how the animal could have been so well trained to act his important character." One evening, Sheridan having dined with Kelly, the two went on to Drury Lane to see again the performance of the marvellous dog. As they entered the green-room they met one of the actors in the piece, Charles Dignum, an excellent vocalist who had also sung in oratorio at this theatre. He said to Sheridan, with a woeful expression, " Sir, there is no guarding against illness ; it is truly lamentable to stop the run of a successful piece like this ; but really——" " Really what ? " cried Sheridan, interrupting him. " I am so unwell," continued Dignum, " that I cannot play any longer after to-night." " *You* ! " exclaimed Sheridan, " only you ! My good fellow, you terrified me ; I thought you were going to say that the DOG was taken ill." Naturally poor Dignum did not appreciate this witticism so much as its other auditors in the green-room did. Sheridan's humour was often of an unkindly nature, as in the case of " Gunter's Bill." An account was owing to Hanson, an ironmonger, who called upon Sheridan and pressed for payment. Sheridan had just received a bill from Gunter for a somewhat similar amount. Turning to Hanson, he said, " You know Gunter ? " " One of the safest men in London," replied the ironmonger. " Then will you be satisfied if I give you his bill for the amount ? " " Certainly," was the reply. Thereupon Sheridan handed him Gunter's neatly folded account, and left the room, to permit the unfortunate Hanson to learn at his leisure the different meanings of the word " bill."

Poor canine Carlo, having at length exhausted his popularity at Drury Lane, it became necessary to find another comedy, and, nothing new being available, Wroughton, the stage-manager, rummaged about in the prompter's room, where lay many plays that had been sent in long ago, never examined, and were now forgotten. He chanced to put his hand on one named *The Honey Moon*, by John Tobin (1770–1804). It was produced on January 31st, 1805, and became one of the most successful and popular of comedies, and was famous for many years : but it was all too late for the author, for he had died the previous year. Kelly related that many and many a time he had accompanied poor Tobin to the house, in Argyll Street, of Joseph Richardson (1755–1803), author of *The Fugitive* and part of *The Rolliad*, and one of the proprietors of Drury Lane Theatre, in the vain endeavour to get back the manuscript of *The Honey Moon* : " but he never succeeded even in obtaining a glimpse of it ; excuse upon excuse was made for not restoring it ; and no wonder, for, in fact, they were ignorant that it was in their possession ; and after repeated calls, waiting jobs, and denials, the unfortunate and disappointed author gave up the piece as lost. . . . He took a voyage to the Mediterranean in hopes that change of climate and sea air would restore his health, which was very delicate, but death struck him in the flower of his youth." John Tobin was thirty-four when he died, and, of course, as soon as he was dead, there was a demand for the other works of the author who had been ignored and rejected when alive. His posthumous plays, in addition to *The Honey Moon*, included *The Curfew* (1807) and *The School for Authors* (1808)—which he had indeed found to be a hard one. The man, Joseph Richardson, to whom much of Tobin's misfortune was due—for had *The Honey Moon* not been mislaid all would have been different— ever had good fortune on his side, despite the indolence and procrastination which he aped from his intimate friend Sheridan. He seems to have been favoured with the most wonderful friends, for when he purchased his quarter share of Drury Lane Theatre from Sheridan for £25,000, the Duke of Northumberland, the Duke of Bedford, the Earl of Thanet, and Earl Fitzwilliam raised £14,000 to enable Richardson to complete his purchase. " He was in high favour with the late Duke of Northumberland, who brought him into Parliament for the borough of Newport in Cornwall."

This, the second, Duke of Northumberland (1742–1817) was a true Mæcenas, a prodigal patron of the arts who poured out his wealth with magnificent gesture. Witness his relations with John Kemble. The Duke wished the actor to give some lessons in elocution to his son, Earl Percy (later the third Duke of Northumberland). Kemble immediately consented, with the stipulation that no remuneration should be offered to him, as he felt amply repaid by having it in his power to render the Duke this slight service. Kelly continues the story :

" The origin of this feeling in Kemble is curious, and from its trivial nature not generally known. He told me himself that in the year 1779 he was acting at York, where a play was in preparation in the success of which he was deeply interested ; the Duke of Northumberland commanded two troops of the King's Own Dragoons, then quartered in the City. Kemble applied to one of the officers to permit some of the men off duty to attend the theatre to walk in the processions, to which application he received a somewhat ungracious reply, accompanied by an observation that the soldiers had other duties to attend to. He then wrote to the Duke to ask *his* permission as commanding officer, and immediately received a favourable answer. ' The handsome manner,' said Kemble to me, ' in which His Grace conferred the favour enhanced the obligation, and never has been forgotten by me ; to be able to evince the feeling I entertain by showing His Grace's son every attention in my power is my highest gratification, and sufficient inducement to me to become, as you facetiously call me, " a master of scholars," which no sum of money could induce me to do.' "

When Kemble left Drury Lane in 1803, he purchased a sixth share in Covent Garden, so when the latter theatre was destroyed by fire on September 20th, 1808, it was a very severe loss for the actor. Twenty-three firemen were killed, and Handel's organ was consumed. To conclude the story in Kelly's words :

" Though the destruction of Covent Garden Theatre fell lightly on the performers, it was severely felt by the proprietors, particularly by Kemble, who had staked his all in the purchase of his share ; however, the sympathy his loss excited was powerful, and the liberality he met with noble. It was said that His present Majesty presented him with a thousand pounds, and that the Duke of Northumberland offered him ten thousand, which he refused as a gift but accepted as a loan for a term of years, and gave his bond to His Grace for the repayment. On December 31st, 1808, the first stone of the new theatre was laid by His present Majesty, then Prince of Wales, as Grand Master of Freemasons, and a brilliant sight it was. On that day Kemble, it is reported, received a letter from the Duke of Northumberland, enclosing the bond for ten thousand pounds which I have just mentioned, in which His Grace said, 'That as it was a day of rejoicing he concluded there would be a bonfire, and he requested that the enclosed obligation might be thrown in to heighten the flames.' This magnificent donation was worthy of the house of Percy; and the delicate and handsome manner in which it was conferred richly deserves to be recorded."

The Honey Moon had in its cast a young actor, Collins by name, who would probably have reached a high place in his profession had not death cut short his career as it did that of Tobin, the author of the play. Kelly said Collins was a true disciple of Nature. In this play Elliston had the part of the Duke, and his country dance with Miss Duncan displayed such grace and agility that it was always encored. Drury Lane was now given over almost entirely to musical entertainments composed by Kelly, with Miss De Camp as the bright particular star. Thus in May, 1805, she appeared in *Youth, Love, and Folly* (written by Dimond for Kelly's benefit) as a jockey, and acted the part "with such vivacity, dressed it, and looked it so completely, that she might have passed as having been brought up at Newmarket. The versatility of this lady's talent was very great." In April, 1806, she sang and danced as Morgiana in *The Forty Thieves*. A year later yet another drama by "Monk" Lewis, with music by Kelly, was put on at Drury Lane. This was *The Wood Dæmon, or the Clock has Struck*, a wonderful phantasmagoria of the supernatural, demons, witches, dragons, giants, set amid mountains and forest glooms and the great Gothic hall of a castle, illuminated by the blue lightning and heralded by the crashing thunder, with sacrifice of human victims to the Powers of Darkness—in fact, the whole armoury of legendary mystery and the Tale of Terror is here displayed with a wealth of imagination and dramatic effect that almost merit Kelly's description of "a work of genius." It was a great success in 1807; it was revived for thirty performances the following year, and in 1811 it was rewritten for a revival at the Lyceum Theatre as "a grand musical romance" entitled *One o'Clock, or the Knight and the Wood Dœmon*, with music by Michael Kelly and M. P. King (1773–1823), a versatile composer of all kinds of melody.

"Monk" Lewis having again proved a money-maker in the theatre, still another of his plays, *Adelgitha, or the Fruits of a Single Error*, was mounted at Drury Lane at the end of April, 1807, to follow *The Wood Dœmon*, but it was not nearly so good a romance, although it had a magnificent setting of convents, halls, galleries, all in the Gothic style. The play was based on the career of Robert Guiscard, Duke of Apulia and Calabria. In May, 1808, was produced *The Jew of Mogadore*, by Cumberland, of which Kelly relates:

"It was with great reluctance that the Board of Management at Drury Lane accepted it: therefore, when I had finished the music of the first act, I rested on my oars until I knew their final determination. I met Mr. Sheridan one day in Essex Street, in the Strand, and told him of it. He desired me urgently to go on with it by all means, 'for,' said he, 'if the opera should fail, you will fall with a fine classical scholar, and elegant writer as well as a sound dramatist' (such was his expressed opinion of Cumberland's abilities). 'Go instantly,' continued he, 'to those discerning critics who call themselves the "Board of Management," and tell them from me, if you please, that they are all asses to presume to sit in judgment on the writings of such a man as Cumberland; and say further, that I *order* the opera to be accepted and put into rehearsal.' 'And pray, sir,' said I, 'in what light am I to view this Board of Management? What are they?' 'Pegs to hang hats upon,' said Sheridan. I went to the *pegs*, communicated Mr. Sheridan's command, and the opera was performed accordingly. Braham sang in it charmingly."

This same month Miss Pope took her farewell of the Drury Lane stage, where forty-nine years earlier, in the year 1759, she had made her début as Corinna in *The Confederacy*. Her final appearance was as Deborah in *The Heir-at-Law*, and she spoke her farewell address in the character of Audrey.[1] On June 13th, Madame Catalani[2] performed a scena from *Semiramide* for Kelly's Benefit, in which he also sang, and on June 17th, 1808, he made his last appearance on the Drury Lane stage in the part of Frederick in *No Song, No Supper*. He was forty-five years old, and had been the principal male singer at Drury Lane since 1787, a period of twenty-one years, but he modestly says he did not think himself of sufficient importance to take a formal leave of the public. He had also some further provincial appearances to make. Sheridan arranged with Kelly to remain Musical Director of Drury Lane Theatre, and also stage-manager of the Opera House. When Kelly retired as a performer from Drury Lane, he commuted the very large financial claims (probably arrears of salary for many years) he had upon the property for a small annuity. This, he says, was punctually paid " by all the noblemen and gentlemen who have subsequently formed the various committees of management ; and since the termination of their authority has been discharged with equal honour and scrupulousness of attention by Mr. Elliston, the present lessee. There was also a privilege granted me that upon my benefit at the Opera House any performers attached to the Drury Lane establishment should be available assistants in whatever English drama I might select for representation. It is a proud gratification to me to add that in my brothers and sisters of the sock and buskin I have always found the most cheerful alacrity upon this occasion. . . . While on the stage I did everything in my power by persevering industry in my profession to merit the patronage and liberality which I experienced from an indulgent public. From the first moment I trod the boards of Drury Lane to the moment I quitted it, as far as my feeble efforts went, I endeavoured to support it through all its perplexities. I had a veneration for the theatre where Garrick and Sheridan had presided, and its best interests were nearest my heart. I felt a proud distinction at having been so fortunate as for five and twenty years to have enjoyed the most friendly intimacy and unreserved confidence of its highly-gifted proprietor, whom I look upon, take him for all in all, to have been one of the most extraordinary men of the age in which he lived. Mr. Sheridan did me the honour (as his friend) to introduce me to the best society and the first literary men in the kingdom, who all sought his company. They were sure to find him almost every night at my house, where he was the great magnet of attraction."

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[1] See *ante*, pp. 163–164.

[2] See later, p. 354.

On December 1st, 1808, another play by "Monk" Lewis, entitled *Venoni*, with music by Kelly, was produced at Drury Lane. As its sub-title, *The Novice of St. Mark's*, adumbrates, the story is of convents and monasteries; the theme, like that of *The Monk*, and *The Italian* of Mrs. Radcliffe, is preoccupied with the vices of the priesthood, the villain in this case being the egregious Abbot Cœlestino. The last act on the night of production proved a fiasco, as the audience giggled at the scene where hero and heroine, confined in adjoining cells, but unknown to each other, in turn warbled their laments and sufferings. The convention, of course, is a common occurrence in opera, but in the case of *Venoni* it caused the temporary withdrawal of the piece after five performances, for, although the first two acts were applauded, the unlucky duet of the lovers in durance vile in the third was invariably hissed, so, as Kelly says, "the author, finding the public determined on this point, conceived the whimsical (and I believe unexampled) idea of reproducing it with an entirely new last act, constructed out of the most opposite materials from those of the original one. Strange as this scheme may appear, it succeeded. *Venoni* reappeared with a bran-new catastrophe, and proved a favourite with the town."

But the second birth of *Venoni* was cut short, after eighteen performances, by dramatic flame and fire far more realistic than the torments of Hell to which presumably Lewis would consign his sinful Abbot, for on February 24th, 1809, Drury Lane Theatre was destroyed by fire, in less than fifteen years after its erection,[1] and only five months after the burning of Covent Garden Theatre:

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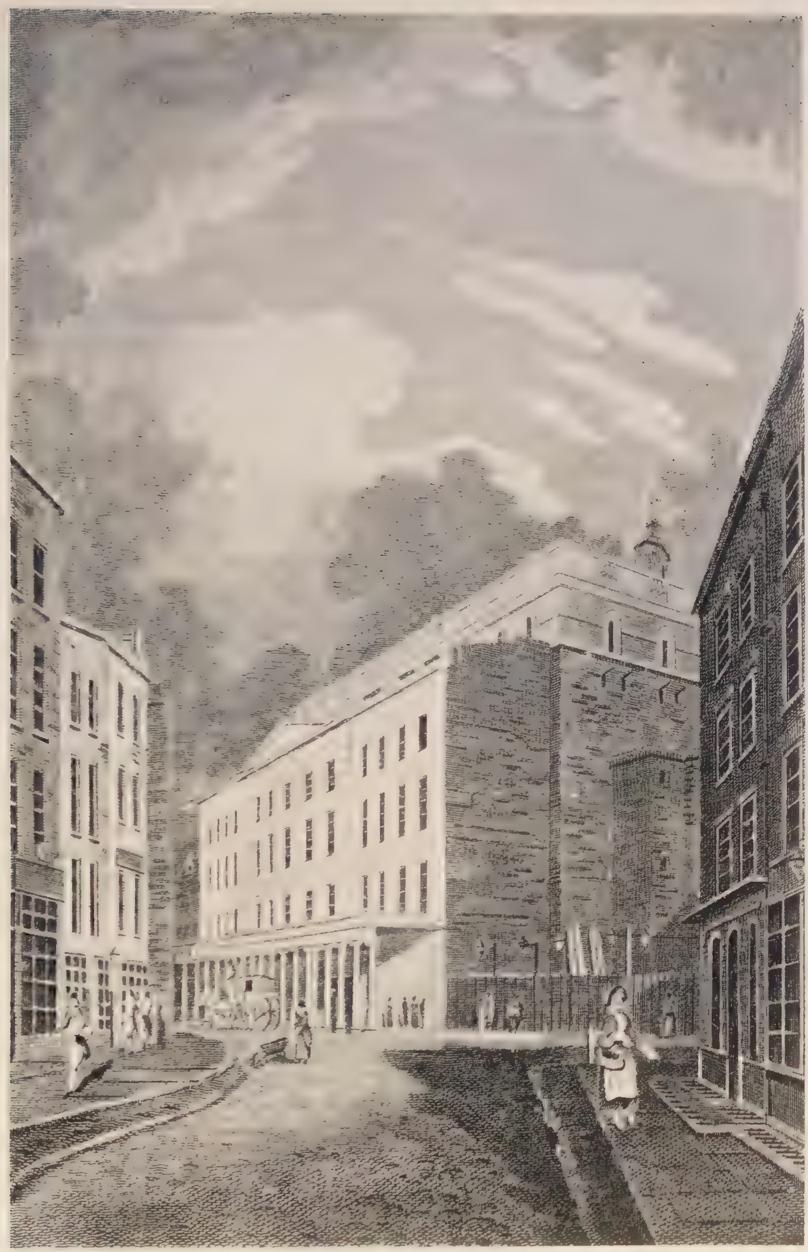
[1] The third Drury Lane was one of the largest theatres in Europe at that time. It contained "four tiers of boxes, elegantly painted and ornamented, with a number of private boxes ingeniously constructed, and ranged upon each side of the pit, capable of accommodating in all about 1,960 persons. Behind the front boxes is a large semi-circular saloon, enriched with a fine statue of Garrick, and above this is another, similar but smaller, in both of which refreshments are provided for the audience. An immense cistern, well supplied with water, to prevent accidents from fire, occupies the space above these saloons. . . . The

So London's sons in nightcap woke,
In bed-gown woke her dames ;
For shouts were heard 'mid fire and smoke,
And twice ten hundred voices spoke—
" The play-house is in flames."
And lo ! where Catherine Street extends,
A fiery tail its lustre lends
To every window-pane ;
Blushes each spout in Martlet Court,
And Barbican, moth-eaten fort,
And Covent Garden kennels sport
A bright ensanguined drain. . . .
Not these alone, but far and wide,
Across red Thames's gleaming tide,
To distant fields the blaze was born. . . .
To those who on the hills around
Beheld the flames from Drury's mound,
As from a lofty altar rise,
It seem'd that nations did conspire
To offer to the god of fire
Some vast stupendous sacrifice.

So it was written in the best of those *Rejected Addresses* (the one in parody of Walter Scott), which had their origin in the burning and rebuilding of Drury Lane Theatre. Another of the poems expressed the vulgar half-belief that the Corsican Ogre must somehow have had a hand in the frequent fires that destroyed the theatres of London :

Base Buonaparte, filled with deadly ire,
Sets, one by one, our play-houses on fire.
Some years ago he pounced with deadly glee on
The Opera House, then burnt down the Pantheon. . . .
Who burnt (confound his soul !) the houses twain
Of Covent Garden and of Drury Lane.

receipts of a single night have been known to amount to nearly £800. The stage measures 105 feet in length, 95 in width, and 45 between the stage doors. Its scenery, machinery, and dresses are unrivalled for beauty and magnificence. An immense iron curtain separates the audience from the stage in case of any accident occurring. . . . A stone ballustrade, upon which is erected a colossal statue of Apollo, surmounts the building." But the precautions against fire by means of stored water and iron curtain proved unavailing.



EXTERIOR OF THE THIRD DRURY LANE THEATRE, 1805

Destroyed by fire in 1809

Kelly, as will be seen from his own account of the tragedy, suffered a severe loss in the destruction of all the manuscript music of the numerous operas that he had composed for Drury Lane :

" On February 24th, 1809, Mr. Richard Wilson gave a dinner to the principal actors and officers of Drury Lane Theatre, at his house in Lincoln's Inn Fields. All was mirth and glee : it was about eleven o'clock when Mr. Wilson rose, and drank ' Prosperity and Success to Drury Lane Theatre ' ; we filled a bumper to the toast, and at the very moment we were raising the glasses to our lips, repeating ' Success to Drury Lane Theatre,' in rushed the younger Miss Wilson, now Mrs. Montague Oxenden, and screamed out that ' Drury Lane Theatre was in flames ! ' We ran into the Square and saw the dreadful sight ; the fire raged with such fury that it perfectly illuminated Lincoln's Inn Fields with the brightness of day. We proceeded to the scene of destruction ; Messrs. Peake and Dunn, the treasurers, dashed upstairs at the hazard of their lives to the iron chest, in which the papers of the greatest consequence were deposited. With the aid of two intrepid firemen they succeeded in getting the chest into the street : little else was saved.

" I had not only the poignant grief of beholding the magnificent structure burning with merciless fury, but of knowing that all the scores of the operas which I had composed for the theatre, the labour of years, were then consuming : it was an appalling sight, and, with a heavy heart, I walked home to Pall Mall. At the door I found my servant waiting for me, who told me that two gentlemen had just called, and, finding I was not at home, had said, ' Tell your master when he comes home that Drury Lane is now in flames, and that the Opera House shall go next.' I made every effort to trace these obliging personages, but never heard anything more of them. Mr. Sheridan was in the House of Commons when the dreadful event was made known, and the debate was one in which he was taking a prominent part ; in compliment to his feelings, it was moved that the House should adjourn. Mr. Sheridan said that he gratefully appreciated such a mark of attention, but he would not allow an adjournment, for that ' Public duty ought to precede all private interest,' and with Roman fortitude he remained at his post while his play-house was burning.[1] The next morning several of the principal performers called in Pall Mall to consider what could be done in the dreadful position of affairs; and while we were debating a message came from Mr. Sheridan to know where he could meet us? Wroughton, who was at that time our stage-manager, asked John Bannister, Dowton, myself, and a few more of the principal actors to dine with him in Gower Street; and wrote to Mr. Sheridan to request he would meet us there, which he punctually did.

"After dinner, lamenting the dreadful situation in which we, as well as himself, were placed by the conflagration, he said, that the first consideration was to find a place where we could perform under his 'Drury Lane patent'; for, though the theatre was destroyed, the patent was not, and that he would make every effort in his power to forward the interests and wishes of the company without any private consideration of his own, until arrangements might be made to rebuild Drury Lane Theatre. The only request he would make, which was with him a *sine qua non*, was, that the whole of the company with heart and hand should stand by one another, and that there should be no separation; 'for,' said he, 'I am aware that many of the principal performers may get profitable engagements at the different provincial theatres, but what then would become of the inferior ones, some of whom have large families? Heaven forbid that they should be deserted! No! I earnestly recommend and entreat that every individual belonging to the concern should be taken care of. Let us make a long pull, a strong pull, and a pull together; and, above all, make the general good our sole consideration. Elect yourselves into a committee; but keep in your remembrance even the poor sweepers of the stage, who, with their children, must starve if not protected by your fostering care.'

"Such were the sentiments delivered in my presence by Mr. Sheridan, who, on every occasion which called for the expression of his feeling towards our profession, showed himself the warmest advocate and supporter of its reputation and prosperity; in confirmation of which I cannot refrain from quoting the following passage from a letter which he wrote to me some years since, upon my consulting him as to some matters of importance to my professional interests. ‘ In my way,’ he observes, ‘ of viewing the profession and treating its professors, I never considered it fit that the proprietors should, every year, weigh and gauge the decrease of theatrical power which time or accident may have occasioned; and, overlooking past services, hunt after every change and substitute which may, for the moment, be advantageous.’ This feeling was highly honourable to Mr. Sheridan, not only in his character of manager of a theatre, but as indicative of a filial feeling of respect for the profession of which his father had been a member, and by the exercise of which he had been enabled to give the splendid abilities of his gifted son the advantages of the best cultivation.”

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[1] Thomas Moore, in his *Life of Sheridan*, and Grace and Philip Wharton, in their *Wits and Beaux of Society*, attribute to Kelly a story that is not in his *Reminiscences*, namely that while the fire at Drury Lane was still raging he found Sheridan drinking wine at the *Bedford* tavern near by, and that, on his expressing his astonishment at this *sang-froid*, Sheridan observed, "Surely you will admit that a man has a right to take his wine at his own fire-side."

Once again homeless, the Drury Lane Company went to the Opera House in the Haymarket for three nights in March, 1809, and then moved to the Lyceum Theatre, opening in April with *John Bull*, where they remained under the management of Tom Sheridan, Colonel Greville, and Samuel James Arnold, who was the son of Doctor Arnold, the composer, and friend of the Storaces. Tom Sheridan was much more business-like than his father; salaries were now paid regularly, and everything was successful and happy. In the meanwhile, Drury Lane was being rebuilt, under the direction of Benjamin Wyatt (1775–1850) as architect. The fire had been a terrible financial loss to Sheridan and John Grubb; the latter died before the new theatre was opened on October 10th, 1812, under the management of a large committee of twenty-one gentlemen, many of them Members of Parliament, including Lord Holland, Thomas Brand (later Lord Dacre), Samuel Whitbread, Thomas Hope, and Douglas Kinnaird. The opening play was a revival of *Hamlet*. On January 23rd, 1813, there was produced a romantic drama, *Remorse*, by one of the greatest literary men of the time, Samuel Taylor Coleridge. Kelly relates of this play:

“ There were some musical situations in the piece which I had to compose. The poetry of the incantation was highly animating;

it was sung by Mrs. Bland with all the refreshing purity of her unsophisticated style, and with that chaste expression and tenderness of feeling which speak at once as it were to the heart. The chorus of boatmen chaunting on the water under the convent walls, and the distant peal of the organ accompanying the monks while singing within the convent chapel, seemed to overcome and soothe the audience ; a thrilling sensation appeared to pervade the great mass of congregated humanity, and during its performance it was listened to with undivided attention, as if the hearts and minds of all were rivetted and enthralled by the combination presented to their notice ; and at the conclusion the applause was loud and protracted. I was fortunate enough to hear from the highly-talented author of the play that my music was everything he could have wished. I felt this as a high compliment from Mr. Coleridge, for I understood when he was in Sicily and other parts of Italy he had this *Miserere Domine* set to music by different Italian composers, none of whom satisfied him by giving his poetry the musical expression which he desired."

At Drury Lane on November 25th, 1813, was produced a musical piece, composed by Kelly, called *Illusion, or the Trances of Nourjahad,* written by Samuel James Arnold (1774–1852), the dramatist who married the daughter of H. J. Pye, the ridiculed Poet Laureate. The drama was, of course, based on Mrs. Frances Sheridan's famous romance of *Nourjahad,* which appeared after the author's death in 1767, when her famous son, Richard Brinsley Sheridan, was sixteen years of age. Byron saw the third performance of this play, for he notes in his Journal on November 27th, 1813 : " To-night I went with young Henry Fox[1] to see *Nourjahad,* a drama which *The Morning Post* hath laid to my charge, but of which I cannot even guess the author. . . . I suppose the root of this report is my loan to the manager of my Turkish drawings for his dresses, to which he was more welcome than to my name. I suppose the real author will soon own it, as it has succeeded ; if not, Job be my model, and Lethe my beverage." Byron also refers to this matter in a letter to John Murray, written on the same day, when, after alluding to *The Giaour,* he repeats, " *The Morning Post* says *I* am the author of *Nourjahad* ![1] . . . It is not worth a *formal contradiction*. Besides, the criticisms on the *supposition* will, some of them, be quite amusing and furious. The *Orientalism*—which I hear is very splendid—of the Melodrame (whosever it is, and I am sure I don't know) is as good as an Advertisement for your Eastern stories by filling their heads with glitter. You will of course *say* the truth, that I am *not* the Melo-dramatist—if anyone charges me in your presence with the performance." Byron does not seem to have been altogether displeased by the charge of the authorship of the play, which, as related above, he went to see that same night; and three days later he returned to the subject again in his Journal: "Tuesday, 30th. Saturday, I went with Harry Fox to *Nourjahad*; and, I believe, convinced him, by incessant yawning, that it was not mine. I wish the precious author would own it, and release me from his fame. The dresses are pretty, but not in costume;—Mrs. Horn's, all but the turban, and the want of a small dagger (if she is a sultana), *perfect*. I never saw a Turkish woman with a turban in my life—nor did any one else. The sultanas have a small poniard at the waist. The dialogue is drowsy—the action heavy—the scenery fine—the actors tolerable. I can't say much for their seraglio—Teresa, Phannio, or XXXX, were worth them all."

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[1] Later the fourth and last Lord Holland, and at this date a boy of eleven.

On June 16th, 1813, Kelly brought out for his annual benefit, at Drury Lane, *Polly*, the sequel to *The Beggar's Opera*, which had been arranged by Horace Smith, then at the pinnacle of his fame as one of the fraternal joint authors of *Rejected Addresses*. Kelly composed some new music for this production, which, however, was not successful. History was repeated in the same way in the revival of *Polly* a few years ago, for it never took the popular fancy in the way *The Beggar's Opera* has done in the twentieth century. Yet *Polly* is as good as her predecessor.

Kelly now had the gratification of seeing the triumphant return to Drury Lane, as a finished actor, of Edmund Kean, to whom some twenty-three years earlier he had assigned the part of the infant Cupid in *Cymon*. He says:

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[1] Kelly's mention of the name of Arnold as the author of *Illusion, or the Trances of Nourjahad*, clears up a small point in Byron's biography. The authorship was apparently unknown to the editor of *The Works of Lord Byron*, 1903, for in "Letters and Journals," vol. ii., p. 288 where the above quotations occur, it is merely stated that the report of Byron's authorship was also made in *The Satirist* (vol. xiii., p. 508); and that the play in question is described by Genest as "a Melo-dramatic spectacle in three acts by an anonymous author." Elliston played the part of Nourjahad, and Mrs. Horn that of Mandane.

"On January 26th, 1814, I had the pleasure to witness the first appearance of Mr. Kean as Shylock in *The Merchant of Venice*, and was delighted with the performance of my original Cupid in *Cymon*. There was not a good house, but the audience gave him that applause on his *entrée* which they are always liberal enough to bestow on a first appearance; but during the principal part of his scenes in the play, and at his exit, the applause lasted for some moments. It is pretty generally known that Mr. Whitbread received a letter from the Rev. Dr. Drury recommending Mr. Kean in such strong terms to Drury Lane Theatre that Mr. Whitbread requested Mr. Arnold to go to Dorchester (I think) to see and engage him for Drury Lane; Mr. Arnold dined with me on the very day he set off on his mission. He saw Mr. Kean in a principal part in a play, and after it as Harlequin in a pantomime; in the latter character he is universally allowed to have no competitor. Mr. Arnold, with a discerning eye, saw his merit, and offered him terms for Drury Lane which he could not accept, as a few days previous to Mr. Arnold's seeing him he had engaged himself to the manager of the Olympic Theatre in Wych Street, as principal Harlequin, and to superintend the getting up of the pantomimes, for which he was to receive two or three pounds a week. Mr. Arnold and the Drury Lane Committee made interest with the proprietor of the Olympic to let Kean off his engagement, which he liberally consented to do.

"I was present at his first appearance in *Richard III*; there was a crowded house, and I believe that his acting that part drew more money to the treasury than any other actor's ever did. I wrote to him to know if he had ever been in Ireland; in his reply he informed me he had been to Waterford, but never to Dublin. I wrote to my friend Jones recommending him strongly to make him the best offer his theatre could afford, as I was sure he would draw him full houses every night. Mr. Jones wrote to me immediately saying he would give him similar terms to those which Mrs. Siddons and Mr. Kemble had. Kean accepted them, and set off for Dublin, accompanied by my friend Pope, who was also very instrumental in procuring him the engagement.

He drew a crowded audience every time he acted; Pope performed with him in all his plays, and for his reward had a good house at his benefit.

"In my humble opinion, Kean's acting in the third act of *Othello* is his best performance. The first night he acted it at Drury Lane I sat in my seat in the orchestra, which was appropriated to me as Director of the Music, and next to me was Lord Byron, who said: 'Mr. Kelly, depend upon it, this is a man of genius.' Mr. Sheridan, though very curious to see him, would not go to the theatre, having made a vow in consequence of some offence he had received from the Committee of Management never to enter its walls. Mrs. Sheridan, who at this time was very ill and confined for many weeks, had also a great curiosity to see Mr. Kean perform the part of Othello; but as she could not venture to the theatre, Mr. Sheridan requested Kean to come to his house and read the play, which he did. The following day I saw Sheridan, and asked his opinion of Kean; he told me he was very much pleased with him, that he had once studied the part of Othello himself to act at Sir Watkin William Wynn's private theatre in Wales, and that Kean's conception of Othello was the precise counterpart of his own. This, which, as it was intended no doubt for a compliment, would have sounded like vanity in anybody else, in a man of Mr. Sheridan's acknowledged ability must have been highly flattering to Mr. Kean.

"I have always considered Mr. Kean an actor of great genius; but I feel much pleasure in mentioning a trait in his private character which came under my own cognizance. There was a Mr. Conyngham, a native of Ireland, who in former days I remember a favourite with the Irish audience, and for many years a member of the Bath company. He was acting at Brighton; his circumstances were not the most flourishing, and a good benefit would, he said, release him from all his embarrassments. A brother actor advised him to write to Mr. Kean, for if he would come and act for his benefit he might be assured of an overflowing house. 'My good fellow,' replied Conyngham, 'I should be afraid to make so bold a request. It is true at one time when we were acting together we were very intimate, and he was a good-natured fellow; but Ned Kean, then the strolling player, and Mr. Kean, the prop of Drury Lane Theatre, are not one and the same person.' Conyngham, however, was persuaded to write to Kean, and received the following letter in reply, which I have read :

> 'Dear Tom,—I am sorry that you are not as comfortable in life as I wish you ; put me up for any of my plays next Thursday, and I shall be most happy to act for your benefit. In the meantime, accept the enclosed trifle to make the pot boil.'

The enclosed was a ten-pound note. On the Thursday he arrived at Brighton, and his performance drew poor Conyngham an overflowing audience. But nothing could induce Kean to accept one sixpence for his travelling or other incidental expenses. To descant on the kindness of such an action is useless, it speaks for itself."

In 1815, Kelly superintended the music for the splendid revival of *Macbeth* at Drury Lane, with Kean in the chief part. A special feature was the choral singing ; a large number of male and female performers were engaged. Kelly says, "it was a rare and novel sight to see so great a body of English choral singers on the stage, full of appropriate and animated action," singing "in a style unequalled in my recollection, and the enthusiastic applause which the audience gave them was commensurate with their merits." This year Drury Lane sustained a triple loss by the retirement of Miss Mellon, and the Orestes and Pylades of the theatre—Richard Wroughton and Jack Bannister. The latter, one of the greatest of low comedians (though Garrick thought him more fitted for a tragedian), had been associated with Drury Lane for thirty-seven years, and he took his farewell in his most popular part, that of Walter in *The Children of the Wood*. At the close he advanced to the footlights, and said to the audience : "Consideration of health warns me to retire ; your patronage has given me the means of doing so with comfort. This moment of quitting you nearly overcomes me. At a period when gratitude and respect call upon me to express my feelings with more eloquence than I could ever boast, those feelings deprive me of half the humble powers I may possess on ordinary occasions. Farewell, my kind—my dear benefactors." So he passed to the enjoyment of his comfortable fortune—one of the few actors who have been able to do so—his only affliction being an occasional attack of the gout, which, as Kelly observed, all virtuous persons of his time were subject to; and he lived for another quarter of a century. But the old order was passing, and the old faces passing for ever from Drury Lane. On July 7th, 1816, Sheridan died at his house, No. 14, Savile Row,[1] at the age of sixty-five. He was buried in Westminster Abbey. His pall was borne by a duke, four lords, and the Bishop of London, with the royal Dukes of York and Sussex among the long train of mourners. He died, of course, greatly in debt, and many stories have been told of his sad end. He had sold his interest in Drury Lane for £60,000, but that had been thrown to his creditors. He was confined in a sponging house, and when dying he would have suffered the same fate if his doctor had not intervened. What wonder that he wrote that despairing letter to Rogers, " I am absolutely undone and broken-hearted . . . they are going to break into Mrs. S.'s room and *take me*. For God's sake let me see you." When he lay dead, a stranger, clothed in deep mourning, on the plea of being an old friend, obtained permission to see the corpse. He gazed upon the once-handsome features with seeming emotion, and then drew from his pocket a bailiff's wand, with which he touched the face of the corpse, saying at the same time that he arrested the body in the King's name for a debt of £500. The funeral could not take place until the amount was paid, and Canning and Lord Sidmouth ended the scandal by paying the debt of their friend over his coffin. Kelly was able to contradict the reports that Sheridan was in want of common necessities just before his death :

" The last time I saw Mr. Sheridan was in the room in Drury Lane, formerly the treasury of the old theatre, where a man of the name of Farebrother, an old servant of his, was allowed by the Drury Lane Committee to reside. He was sitting alone reading, with a muffin and a cup of coffee before him. On my entering the room he told me that he had been reading Davies's *Life of Garrick*, 'which,' said he, 'if you have not read, do read, and advise every actor from me to do the same, for it is well worth their attention.' I remained with him till four o'clock in the morning, *tête-à-tête*. I never saw him more pleasant or communicative. He dwelt particularly on his father's acting the part of King John, and without partiality he said, 'His scene with Hubert was a masterpiece of the art, and no actor could ever reach its excellence.' I had been told by Jefferson, the proprietor of the Plymouth theatre, who had often seen old Mr. Sheridan act King John in Dublin, that nothing could surpass it. Mr. Sheridan also spoke of his father's Cato as a masterly performance, as well as his Brutus in *Julius Cæsar*. The Cato of the elder Sheridan was always very popular with the Dublin audience.

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[1] In 1929 Sheridan's former home was purchased by his great-great-great-granddaughter, the Honourable Katharine Norton (daughter of Lord Grantley). It is a fine old house, retaining beautiful panelling and a dome-lighted staircase. Through an existing spy-hole Sheridan is said to have reconnoitred callers in order to detect who might be creditors.

"There were reports industriously circulated through the kingdom that Mr. Sheridan in his later moments was left in want of the common necessaries of life, and the malignant propagators of the report went so far to gratify their own malice as to assert that he called for a lemon when exhausted with thirst, and that neither he nor those about him had the means of procuring him one. I, amongst a thousand others, heard this foolish tale asserted, but I can solemnly aver from my own knowledge and from the evidence of those who were nearest and dearest to him, and who remained with him in his last moments, that all such reports were groundless, and fabricated for the most atrocious purposes of scandal. These dealers in malignity stated that the sum of two hundred pounds was conveyed to Mr. Sheridan in a way that wounded his feelings and returned by his direction with the resentment of wounded pride. It is true the money was sent, but in a totally different manner to that described, and returned in a totally different manner to what the world was taught to believe. The real fact is that Mr. Sheridan's physician, then attending him, and also one of his most intimate friends, undertook to deliver it back to the illustrious donor and, with all respect, to assure him that Mr. Sheridan was in want of no pecuniary assistance.

"I sent a few days before he died for his own man, who was in attendance on him during the whole of his illness, and whom I knew to be faithfully attached to his master. He can testify that I entreated him to inform me if his master was in want of any comforts, for with anything my means could afford I would furnish him, but not to let him or his family know it came from me. John assured me that his master was in want of nothing, and that those who had reported to the contrary, and made up libellous and injurious tales upon the subject, spoke falsely and were base calumniators. The loss I sustained by Mr. Sheridan's death I can but faintly depict: he was, as a companion and friend, to me beyond measure invaluable; his readiness and taste were conspicuous; his wit, though luxuriant and unbounded, never intrusive; and during the five and twenty years through which I enjoyed his friendship and society I never heard him say a single word that could wound the feelings of a human being.

" It was one of Doctor Johnson's sayings that if a man do not make new acquaintances as he advances in life he will soon find himself alone in the world. The truth of the observation I can vouch for by experience. I have found all the friends of my early life drop round me, and honourable and valued as have been many of them, the loss of no one certainly was more deplored by me than that of Mr. Sheridan. If I have said much of him, it was because I loved and respected him."

As the years went by and death removed the old actors of Sheridan's time, Kelly's memory often reviewed those he had known so well during his early years, older men who had admitted him into the sacred circle known as the School of Garrick, prominent members of which were James Dodd (1740–1796), whom Charles Lamb recalled seeing in the gardens of Gray's Inn a short time before his death, and John Moody (1727–1812), whose real name was Cochrane, a native of Cork, where he had been apprenticed in youth to a hairdresser, facts he strove to forget. To continue in Kelly's words:

" Speaking of the School of Garrick and of my belonging to it, I ought perhaps to explain that it was a club formed by a few of the contemporaries of the British Roscius who dined together during the theatrical winter season once a month. They did me the honour (unsolicited on my part) to admit me among them. I was highly flattered as a young man, and duly appreciated the favour. It was, of all societies I ever have been in, perhaps the most agreeable; nothing could surpass it for wit, pleasantry, good-humour, and brotherly love. When I was admitted I found the following members belonging to it:

King,
Dodd,
Moody,
Parsons,
Baddeley,
J. and C. Bannister,
Frank Aickin,
James Aickin,
Farren,
Wroughton,
John Palmer,
Robert Palmer,
and
Burton.

In mentioning their names I need not say what were the flashes of wit and merriment that set the table in a roar; and yet, with the exception of my worthy friend, Jack Bannister (whom God long preserve!), they are all gone to that bourne from which no traveller returns. As they fell off the following members were elected in their room:

Holman,
Johnstone,
Pope,
Suett,
Cherry,
Dowton,
Matthews, the elder,
Charles Kemble.

"My friend Pope gave an excellent dinner upon the occasion of his election at his house in Half Moon Street; and the first Mrs. Pope, the *ci-devant* Miss Younge, who had acted many of the principal characters of our Immortal Bard with distinguished *éclat*, was requested to become a member of the club by accepting the silver medal of Garrick, which each member wore at the meetings of the society.[1] She came amongst us, and seemed to appreciate the flattering attention paid to her high professional merits. She was the only female who ever had the compliment paid her; but, alas! she among the rest is now no more; and delightful as the society was, and intellectual as its recreations were, it gradually dwindled either from deaths or desertions, until at last it has become extinct.

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[1] Elizabeth Younge (1744–97) had won recognition as Imogen at Drury Lane as far back as 1768. She played Cordelia to the Lear of Garrick at his last performance but one, 1776, when, in the words of Doran, "as the curtain descended, they lay on the stage hand in hand, and hand in hand they rose and went, Garrick silently leading, to his dressing-room; whither they were followed by many of the company. There stood Lear and Cordelia, still hand in hand, and mute. At last Garrick exclaimed, 'Ah, Bessie, this is the last time I shall ever be your father; the *last time*.' And he dropped her hand. Miss Younge sighed too, and replied affectionately, with a hope that before they finally parted he would

"Old Moody, who was delighted with everything which reminded him of his great master, was almost broken-hearted at the event. I was always partial to Moody's agreeable society; so to indulge the old gentleman I proposed that he and I should meet once a month, dine together, and keep up the form of the club, which we did for some time. I remember upon one of these occasions, I perceived as we sat over our bottles that he was more than usually low spirited, and I ventured to ask what made him so? 'My dear fellow,' said he, 'I feel myself the most miserable of men, though blessed with health and affluence. Such is the detestable vice of avarice, which I feel growing upon me, that parting with a sixpence is to me like parting with a drop of my heart's blood, for which reason, unconquerable as the growing passion is, I feel that I ought to be abhorred and detested by mankind.' I endeavoured to rally him out of so singular a feeling; and as far as I am personally concerned I can vouch for it that he had no just reason for indulging it; for when I was desirous of purchasing the lease of my house in Pall Mall, and happened to say in his presence that I wanted £500 to complete the bargain, he called upon me the following day and offered me the loan of that sum upon no other security than my simple note of hand. At the *tête-à-tête* meetings of the club he was at times very entertaining, and told me many stories of himself. Amongst others he said that early in life he was sent out to Jamaica; and on his return to England went on the stage, unknown to his friends. I do not recollect the name

kindly give her a father's blessing. Garrick took it as it was meant, seriously; and, as Miss Younge bowed her head, he raised his hands, and prayed that God would bless her. Then, slowly looking round, he murmured, 'May God bless you all!' And, divesting himself of his Lear's dress, tragedy and one of her most accomplished sons were dissevered for ever."

Mrs. Siddons was the formidable rival of Miss Younge in tragedy, and when the latter, at the age of forty-two, became the wife of Alexander Pope, the actor, who was but twenty-three, Mrs. Siddons permitted herself to write the waspish words, "Miss Younge is married to Mr. Pope, a very boy, and the only one she will have by her marriage."

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of the ship in which he told me he came back to England; but he informed me that he worked his passage home as a sailor before the mast.

"One night some time after he had been on the stage, when he was acting Stephano in *The Tempest*, a sailor in the front row of the pit of Drury Lane got up, and, standing upon the seat, hallooed out, "What cheer, Jack Moody; what cheer, messmate!' This unexpected address from the pit rather astonished the audience. Moody, however, stepped forward to the lamps and said, 'Jack Hullet, keep your jawing tacks aboard; don't disturb the crew and passengers; when the show is over make sail for the stage-door and we'll finish the evening over a bowl of punch; but till then, Jack, shut your locker.' After the play was ended the rough son of Neptune was shown to Moody's dressing-room, and thence they adjourned to the *Black Jack* in Clare Market (a house which Moody frequented), and spent a jolly night over sundry bowls of arrack. This story told by himself in humorous manner was very amusing.

"Previous to the dissolution of the club, one night when we were full of mirth and glee, and Moody seated like Jove in his chair, and Mathews amongst other members present, a waiter came in to tell Mr. Henry Johnstone that a gentleman wished to speak to him in the next room. In a few minutes we heard a great noise and bustle, and Henry Johnstone in a loud tone say, 'Sir, you cannot go into the room where the club is; none but members are on any account admitted; such are our rules.' 'Talk not to me of your rules,' said the stranger: 'I insist upon being admitted.' And, after a long controversy of, 'I will go' and 'You shan't go,' the door was burst open and both contending parties came tumbling in. The stranger placed himself next to me, and I thought him the ugliest and most impudent fellow I ever met with. He went on with a rhapsody of nonsense of his admiration of our society, that he could not resist the temptation of joining it, filled himself a glass of wine, and drank to our better acquaintance. Moody, with great solemnity, requested him to withdraw, for no one could have a seat at that table who was not a member. The stranger replied, 'I don't care for your rules; talk not to me of your regulations; I will not stir an inch.' 'Then,' cried the infuriated Moody, 'old as I am, I will take upon myself to turn you out.' Moody jumped up and throttled the stranger, who defended himself manfully ; all was confusion, and poor Moody was getting black in the face ; when the stranger threw off his wig, spectacles, and false nose, and before us stood Mathews himself in *propriâ personâ.* So well did he counterfeit his assumed character that, except Henry Johnstone, who was his accomplice in the plot, not one amongst us suspected him.

"Moody when undeceived was delighted, and added his tribute of applause to Mathews ; and the evening passed off as usual with glee and revelry. The part was admirably managed by Mathews, who had taken an opportunity of leaving the room to prepare himself for his disguise while a song was going on which engrossed the attention of the company, and so slipped out unnoticed."

Charles Mathews (1776-1835) the elder, one of the best of comedians, who in his time played four hundred parts, was connected by marriage with Kelly, as will be seen in a later volume. Kelly tells another good story of Mathews's gifts as a mimic, a story which reads like a scene from Henry Cockton's amusing book, *Valentine Vox.* It was in the year 1814, when Kelly was at Brighton, and a party of his friends, including the Charles Mathewses, the Philipses, the Pooles, and Mr. Maddocks, were staying at a boarding-house kept by Mrs. White on the Grand Parade. They all wanted Kelly to join them here, where there was an excellent and bountiful table, but there was not a vacant bedroom. And this is how the difficulty was solved :

"Mathews was in excellent spirits, and kept every one alive : there was only one damper, in the shape of an old East Indian officer, just returned from Calcutta, who was most unbending, and did not in the least relish their innocent mirth, for the slightest noise brought on a fit of bile ; so that for fear of being disturbed at night he never went to his bed until every inmate, servants and all, were in theirs. His bedchamber adjoined the dining-parlour. My friends were kind enough to wish me to join their social party, but that was not feasible, as there was no bedroom in the house unoccupied. However, they determined among themselves to have me *in*, and the Nabob *out ;* for which purpose, at the solemn hour of midnight, when all the house was thought to be at rest, Mathews left his room, and on the staircase began howling and barking in different tones, in imitation of a kennel of hounds, and squalling and mewing with all his might, like a dozen of wild cats. The Nabob was terrified, and declared the next morning at breakfast that he would not pass such another miserable night to be made Commander-in-Chief. The second night he had another dose, if possible more potent than the first. The scheme succeeded; for the following morning the restless Nabob requested Mrs. White to let him give up his bedroom in the house, and remain with her as a boarder only. He took a lodging in the next street, and I became possessed of his bedchamber. He soon found out the cause of the noises, which, he said, at first he implicitly believed came from a legion of demons. I thought myself extremely fortunate in becoming his *locum tenens*, a situation which I could not have attained but for the excellent imitations of my friend Mathews."

One more story of another member of the Sheridan circle, the eleventh Duke of Norfolk (1746-1815)—" Jock of Norfolk "—who told Kelly, when the latter was taken to dine with him by Sheridan, that he had a number of owls at Arundel Castle. One of the birds was named " Lord Thurlow " by its keeper, from an imaginary likeness to the Lord Chancellor. One morning when the Duke was engaged with his solicitor, in deep consultation on important business, the keeper of the owls knocked at the library door, and said, " Pardon, I have great news to give Your Grace." " Well," replied the Duke, " what is it ? " " Why, Your Grace," said the keeper, " ' Lord Thurlow ' has laid an egg this morning." Forgetting for a moment that the owl had been nicknamed " Lord Thurlow," the Duke was considerably astonished; and, until the keeper explained his news, the solicitor was dreadfully scandalised by such an atrocious calumny upon the head of his profession, the noble lord who had been sitting so long on the woolsack without thought of egg-laying.

Chapter VII

The Opera

All through these years, since the last decade of the eighteenth century, Kelly was continuously associated with the Opera House in the Haymarket in addition to his appearances as singer there, and to his work at Drury Lane as vocalist and director of the music and composer. At the Opera House he was stage-manager for nearly thirty years, while during certain of these years he was also manager, acting-manager, and director of the music. He also engaged the artistes. For the season of 1800 he secured Madame Bolla. On visiting her, he perceived a duet open on the pianoforte, which he asked the diva to sing with him. " Most willingly," she replied ; " I see you wish to hear me before you engage me, and I think you are perfectly right." The unusual audition for a star of this Continental magnitude resulted in Bolla being engaged at the fee she named, £800, and she made her début in Paisiello's *Zingari in Fiera.* In 1803, Kelly went to Italy to engage singers for the Opera chorus. Kelly has a note that, in conjunction with " the handsome Biggin, who ascended in a balloon from Sloane Street with the pretty Mrs. Sage," and who was a trustee for the Opera House, he engaged " the celebrated Winter to compose three Italian operas and three grand ballets for our Opera House. I agreed to pay half his salary for the exclusive right of publishing his music for my own emolument ; and had I not been pillaged, that engagement alone would have been a fortune to me, so popular were his works, and so very extensive the sale of them." Winter and the gallant pioneers in aviation, Biggin and Mrs. Sage, seem alike now forgotten, though their contemporary fame was great. Peter von Winter (1755–1825) was a native of Mannheim, and was later director of the orchestra of the Opera House there. His first opera was *Helena und Paris*, 1780. After periods in Italy and Munich, he came to London in 1803, and his stay there until 1805 coincided with his finest compositions—the operas of *Calypso* (written for Mrs. Billington, who looked and sang the character divinely), *Il Ratto Proserpina*, and *Zaira*, and the grand ballet of *Orphée*. He had developed "a power which entitles him to be ranked very high as a composer for the stage," and of Church music, symphonies, and cantatas.

The Opera House at this period was a brilliant social institution, and approaching to the full splendour it attained during the regime of John Ebers, when for seven years of the reign of George IV, he expended a fortune in presenting the greatest artistes of the Opera and the Ballet, who were attended behind the scenes by their admirers of high rank and wealth. The same fashion prevailed thirty years earlier, in the time of Kelly, and most assiduous of all in his attentions to the fair exponents of song and dance was the eccentric fourth Duke of Queensberry (1724–1810), known as "Old Q.," and the subject of many scandalous stories. Kelly relates of him:

"It was the fashion of the day for the subscribers to the Opera to attend the rehearsals; amongst others the late Duke of Queensberry was a constant attendant; no weather kept him away; there he was on the stage, muff and all. I had the pleasure for many years to be honoured with his peculiar notice; and have been frequently invited to his hospitable table both in Piccadilly[1] and at Richmond.[2] In my intercourse with mankind I never met his superior for worldly knowledge and acuteness; he was a nobleman of polished manners of the *vieille cour*; he had his foibles, it is true, but then who has not? On Tuesdays and Saturdays he had generally a large dinner-party of the French nobility, who were obliged to seek shelter in this country from the horrors of the Revolution; he was well aware that a French lady or gentleman is *au désespoir* unless they can go to some spectacle; and he used the following delicate mode of indulging them in their favourite amusement, knowing that they were too poor to indulge themselves and too proud to accept of pecuniary assistance. After coffee had been handed round he used to ask, 'Who is going to the Italian Opera tonight? I long to use my family privilege.' I was present one evening when the Duchesse de Pienne asked him what this privilege meant? He said it was that of writing admissions for the theatres to any amount he pleased without entailing any expense. This was apparently a joyful hearing to the theatrical amateurs, and nine of the party went that evening to the Opera with his written admissions. He had previously made an arrangement with my worthy friend, Mr. Jewel, the Opera House treasurer, and also, as I understood, with other theatres, that his orders were always to be admitted, and the next morning sent to his steward, who had directions to pay the amount of the admissions which His Grace had sent in. This delicate manner of conferring a favour needs no comment.

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[1] No. 138, now the Lyceum Club.

[2] Queensberry House, adjoining the river-front, near Richmond Green.

" I never saw in any country such comfortable dinners as those of His Grace ; at his sideboard there was a person to carve every joint, and he never had more than three dishes at a time on his table ; but all were hot and comfortable, and the viands the most *recherché*. His chief French cook, whom he denominated his *officier de bouche*, was a great artiste, a real *cordon bleu* who ought to have had, like Cardinal Wolsey's master-cook, a crimson velvet dress with a collar and a gold chain. His wines too were of the most exquisite kind, for His Grace was a votary of Bacchus as well as Venus. He was passionately fond of music and an excellent judge of the art ; but his being very blind and very deaf was certainly somewhat against him. A favourite propensity of his was that of giving instructions in singing : he was kind enough to offer Mrs. Billington and myself to teach us the songs of Polly and Macheath in *The Beggar's Opera* ; and to humour him we have often let him sing to us. It was extremely amusing to all parties, one person excepted, who always accompanied him on the pianoforte and who lived in the house with him ; his name was Ireland but I always called him Job. His Grace asked me one day to dine with him *tête-à-tête* ; after dinner, he told me he had formed a resolution never to have more than one guest at a time ; the reason he gave was that he had grown so deaf that he could scarcely hear. ' Had I,' said he, ' at table more than one person now they would be talking one to the other, and I sitting by not able to hear what they were talking about, which would be extremely provoking ; now if I have but one to dine with me, that one must either talk to me or hold his tongue.' "

The Duke of Queensberry would never receive at his table anyone who held republican opinions, not even the Duc d'Aiguillon,[1] who had been of the highest rank and importance in the nobility of France. Kelly met the Duc through Viotti, the celebrated violinist and leader of the orchestra at the Opera House:

" He asked me to dine with him one day at the ' Crown and Anchor,' in the Strand, to meet three friends of his who formed an economical little dinner club, which they held there once a month. I went, and found his friends three of the greatest revolutionists : Charles Lameth, who had been President of the National Assembly ; Dupont, the popular orator of that time, also a member of the National Assembly, and who was the very person whom I had seen offer to hand the poor Queen of France out of her carriage, when brought back prisoner from Varennes, which she indignantly refused[2] ; and the Duc d'Aiguillon, one of the twelve Peers of France, who, in former days, had an immense fortune, was a great patron of the arts, and so theatrical that he had a box in every theatre in Paris. He was particularly fond of music, and had been a scholar of Viotti. I passed a pleasant day with these *émigrés*, who were all men of high endowments and truly polished manners, nor did they seem at all depressed by change of circumstances ; all was vivacity and good-humour.

" The Duc sat next to me at dinner. I asked him if he had seen Drury Lane Theatre ; his reply was, ' I have seen the outside of it, but I am now too poor to go to theatres ; for did I indulge in my favourite amusement, I should not be enabled to have the pleasure of meeting you and my worthy friends at dinner to-day : I cannot afford both.' I told him that as manager of the Opera House, and musical director of Drury Lane Theatre, I should have great pleasure in giving him and his friends admissions nightly for either of those theatres ; and that my box at the Opera House was at their service on the following Saturday, and I requested they would do me the honour to dine with me on that day, and afterwards visit it. They favoured me with their company, and much delighted they were : often and often afterwards did they dine and sup with me. I introduced them to Mr. Sheridan and many of my friends. It was certainly, I thought, to be lamented that men possessing such amiable manners should, from strong republican principles, bring themselves into misfortune; but I had nothing to do with their politics: I only saw the bright side of their characters, and felt a sincere pleasure, as far as lay in my power, in administering, in my little way, comfort to those who were labouring under so sad a reverse of fortune; for, in this country, the French *noblesse* would not associate with them. Even the Duc d'Aiguillon, though one of the highest noblemen in France, was never received by the Duke of Queensberry, nor did he visit anywhere.

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[1] Armand Viquerod Duplessis Richelieu, Duc d'Aiguillon (1750–1800), was descended from the great Richelieu's niece (or illegitimate daughter). He was Député in 1789 to the Etats Généraux for Agen. Joined the Tiers État. He came to London in 1790, and later went to Hamburg, where he died.

[2] See *ante*, p. 186.

"One morning he called upon me, and said he had a favour to beg of me. He said, 'My dear Kelly, I am under many obligations for your repeated acts of kindness and hospitality to me and my friends; but still, though under a cloud, and labouring under misfortunes, I cannot forget that I am the Duc d'Aiguillon, and *cannot stoop to borrow and beg from mortal*; but I confess I am nearly reduced to my last shilling, yet still I retain my health and spirits; formerly, when I was a great amateur, I was particularly partial to copying music—it was then a source of amusement to me. Now, my good friend, the favour that I am about to ask is that, *sub rosa*, you will get me music to copy for your theatres, upon the same terms as you would give to any common copyist who was a stranger to you. I am now used to privations, my wants are few; though accustomed to palaces, I can content myself with a single bedroom up two pair of stairs; and if you will grant my request, you will enable me to possess the high gratification of earning my morsel by the work of my hands.' I was moved almost to tears by the application, and was at a loss what to answer, but thought of what Lear says, 'Take physic, pomp!' and 'to what man may be reduced.' I told him I thought I could procure him as much copying as he could do, and he appeared quite delighted; and the next day I procured plenty for him. He rose by daylight to accomplish his task—was at work all day—and at night, full dressed, in the Opera House, in the pit. While there, he felt himself Duc d'Aiguillon; and no one ever suspected him to be a drudge in the morning, copying music for a shilling per sheet; and strange to say, his spirits never drooped: nine Englishmen out of ten under such circumstances would have destroyed themselves; but the transitory peace of mind he enjoyed was not of long duration; an order came from the Alien Office for him and his friends to leave England in two days; they took an affectionate leave of me. The Duc went to Hamburg, and there was condemned to be shot. They told me that he died like a hero.

" He had a favourite Danish dog, a beautiful animal, which he consigned to my protection, until, as he told me, he had an opportunity to send for him with safety. I pledged myself to take every care of him, and never shall I forget his parting with the faithful animal; it seemed as if the last link which held him to society was breaking; the dog had been the faithful companion of his prosperity—his adversity; he caressed and shed a flood of tears on quitting it. The scene was grievous; but I did not then think that I should never see the Duc more. I took every care of his poor dog—who, missing his kind master, after a little refused all nourishment, and actually pined and died. Yet he survived the being who had fed and cherished him."

In the spring of 1801, Kelly's brother Joseph brought to Mrs. Crouch's cottage in the King's Road, Chelsea, young Thomas Moore, then twenty-two years old, and dallying at the Bar, though he had already published his translations of the Odes of Anacreon and was preparing his first volume of verse under the guise of "Thomas Little." Kelly was much entertained by the conversation of his climbing, if diminutive, compatriot, and saw more of him. He asked Moore to write a play for the Haymarket Theatre. This was duly supplied in the form of *The Gipsey Prince*; Kelly composed the music and played the principal part, wherein, as the Gipsey Prince, he had to sing this song:

I have roamed through many a weary round,
I have wandered East and West;
Pleasure in every clime I found,
But sought, in vain, for rest.

When Glory sighs for other climes,
I feel that one's too wide;
And think a home which Love endears
Is worth a world beside.

The needle, thus, too roughly moved,
Wandered unconscious where ;
Yet, having found the place it loved,
It, trembling, settled there.

The song and the rest of the verses written for *The Gipsey Prince* do not seem to find a place in the collected work of Moore, and he did not, apparently, think much of the music Kelly composed for his play, for Moore wrote to his mother on this matter, quoting Sheridan : " Poor Mick is rather an imposer than composer, but he has the knack of pleasing the many."

This same year, 1801, Kelly indulged in a speculation somewhat foreign to his artistic temperament, and one which consequently involved him in the financial difficulties that accompanied his last years. At this date there stood in Pall Mall, immediately south of the Opera House and actually touching its walls (the main entrance to the theatre being in the Haymarket), some ancient houses. Eight or nine of these dwellings, which probably dated from the seventeenth century, are marked in Horwood's map (1794) as standing between the Opera House and Pall Mall, in the section from the Haymarket to Market Lane, which was a small thoroughfare running up to Charles Street on the west side of the Opera House and now represented by the Opera Arcade, for the latter follows the original course north of Market Lane.[1] The most ancient of these houses was known as No. 9, Pall Mall, and Kelly was persuaded to acquire the premises for the purpose he thus details :

" It will be remembered that at the corner of Market Lane, in Pall Mall, there was an old house, almost falling, the lease of which (it had sixteen years to run) was to be sold. The owner was Mr. Rice, box-keeper to the Little Theatre in the Haymarket. Mr. Taylor, the proprietor of the Opera House, suggested a plan to me which, he said, he was convinced would make my fortune, namely, to buy the lease of that house, put it into thorough repair, and make a large shop in it to sell my own compositions. As a further temptation he told me that I should have a door opening to the stage of the Opera House, and that all the subscribers to the Opera, for the great convenience of having a private passage and easy access to their carriages and sedan-chairs, would most willingly subscribe two guineas a year each which would amply reimburse me for the expense attending it. And also that by paying a portion of the salaries of the opera composers from abroad, I should have the music of the operas and ballets to publish exclusively for my own emolument.[1] And moreover that being manager of the Opera House, living as it might be said under its roof, would be a great advantage to me in attending rehearsals and performances and in being always on the spot where my services were required. All these advantages were very alluring ; no situation could be better for a music-shop ; in short, through Fancy's aid I hoped in sixteen years to be as rich as Crœsus but :

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[1] Grantley Berkeley, writing in 1864, speaks of Market Lane as " the passage at the back of the theatre, now known as the Opera Colonnade ; being a short cut to a low market close by, all kinds of dirty people used to make it their thoroughfare—we must all recollect the state it was in in our day—to the special annoyance of the aristocracy who had to pass that way to get from their carriages to their private boxes, or from the box to the carriage." The open market of St. James's, alluded to by Berkeley, was to the west of the Haymarket, near the later sites of East Jermyn Street and Lower Regent Street. Waterloo Place was then St. Albans Street. The Opera House was the second building on the site ; the first, dating from 1703, having been burned down in 1789, the foundation stone of the new theatre was laid on April 3rd, 1790, by the Earl of Buckinghamshire, and the building was ready a year later ; it was reconstructed in 1818, and eventually destroyed by fire in December, 1867.

Hope told a flattering tale.

" Five hundred guineas were required for the lease, and on a moderate calculation a thousand more to make the requisite alterations. At this time I had the distinguished honour of attending His Royal Highness the Prince of Wales when he had music at Carlton House. I humbly took the liberty to mention to His Royal Highness the plan I had formed to open a shop for the sale of my own music, and to entreat his royal opinion. He condescendingly gave his opinion that I was perfectly right, ' for,' graciously added His Royal Highness, ' in a commercial country like ours nothing can be more creditable than for a man to sell the produce of his own abilities, or indeed of any other person's.'

" Sanctioned by such an opinion I made up my mind, and with the assistance of my good friend Moody I purchased the lease of the house and almost rebuilt it. The expenditure was far beyond what I was led to anticipate. However, I spared no cost, stocked it well with other music besides my own, engaged shopmen, porters, etc., and opened it to the public on January 1st, 1802. The crowds of people who came to purchase music by way of bringing me (as they said) good luck were immense. The subscription was opened for the Opera visitors to get an easy access to their carriages. The ladies-subscribers said it was delightful to have such an accommodation. Most of them immediately put down their names, but very few of them ever put down their money, although there was a considerable current expense attending it for fires, lighting, and extra servants. I began to think I was not fitted for what I had undertaken, and reflected on the proverb, ‘ The eye of the master fattens the horse.’ Indeed, my occupations at Drury Lane, Covent Garden, and Haymarket, both as performer and composer, besides being manager of the Italian Opera and musical director at Drury Lane and the Little Theatre in the Haymarket, were quite enough to engage any one man’s mind without entering into a business which required every attention paid to it from morning till night. Too late, alas ! was I convinced of my error, but I was in for it too deep to retract.”

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[1] I have copies of some of the music sold by Kelly. They bear the words, " Printed and published by Mr. Kelly at his Opera Saloon, 9, Pall Mall."

With No. 9 Kelly seems at this time to have acquired also No. 4, Pall Mall, another of the ancient houses before mentioned. He called No. 9 “ The Saloon ” and either to this dwelling or to No. 4 he and Mrs. Crouch removed from New Lisle Street. It was, in fact, Mrs. Crouch’s last home in London, and she appreciated the direct access to her box in the Opera House by means of a private door from her own residence. Kelly appears as the occupant of these two houses as late as 1812, after which he went to live at No. 13, Great Russell Street, Covent Garden, close to Drury Lane Theatre, a vicinity which his increasing gout made a necessary consideration.

A memorable operatic event in the early part of 1802 was the return of the beautiful Mrs. Billington after an absence from England of several years. One of the greatest singers[1] of all time, Elizabeth Weichsel was born in 1768, her father, the principal oboist at the King's Theatre, being a native of Saxony. She appeared at Covent Garden at the age of eighteen, and had married, when only fifteen, James Billington, a member of the orchestra at Drury Lane. Her second husband was a Frenchman named Felissent. Mrs. Billington's moral lapses were regarded as reprehensible even in the eighteenth century. She was the immediate predecessor of Mrs. Crouch as the mistress of the Prince of Wales, and, in describing this matter, Huish, in his *Memoirs of George the Fourth*, states :

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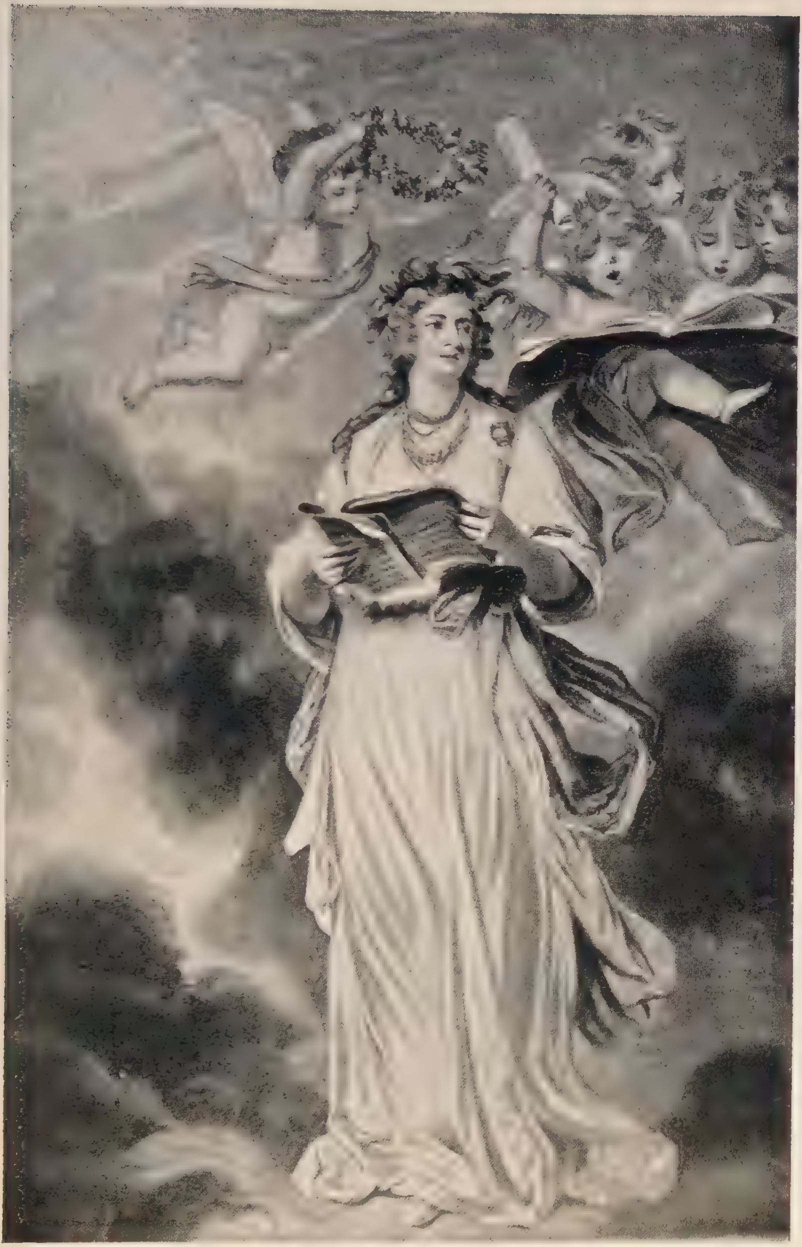
[1] Mrs. Billington’s voice ranged from D to G in altissimo, and she sang at sight Mozart’s “ Clemenza di Tito.” One of her most famous songs was “ The Soldier tired of War’s Alarms.”

" The exterior of this woman had something to recommend her to the attention of the royal libertine, but her manners were distinguished by the utmost grossness, and in many instances by the most positive indelicacy. To enter into any description of the life of Mrs. Billington previously to her connexion with the Prince were to stain our pages. Those, who like ourselves are aware of some particular traits in the character of Mrs. Billington, and of the peculiar penchant which was her ruling passion in her intercourse with her favourites, must be well aware that the Prince of Wales was, notwithstanding his exalted rank and high personal endowments, not exactly the individual who could long enchain her affections. It was behind the scenes of the theatre that the Prince first became acquainted with Mrs. Billington, and at that time she appeared to be his chief inducement for visiting the theatre. The vicinity of her dwelling to the Thames, it being situate at Fulham, and immediately on the banks of the river, offered many facilities to the Prince to partake of the society of the fascinating syren, and to enjoy the delights of her musical conversaziones, which were held almost every night that her presence was not required at the theatre. The connexion of the Prince was not, however, of long duration ; the coarseness of her manners soon disgusted him, and he declared at last, that the only satisfaction he enjoyed in her society was when he shut his eyes and opened his ears."

When Mrs. Billington returned to London in 1802, she performed at both Drury Lane and Covent Garden. At the former house, Kelly sang with her in all her operatic triumphs, including *Artaxerxes*. She was received with rapturous applause, and on each night drew crowded houses. On March 28th, Mrs. Billington



MRS. BILLINGTON AS ST. CECILIA

From the picture by Sir Joshua Reynolds

appeared at the Opera House in *Merope* for the benefit of Madame Banti, who on this occasion, for the first time, donned male attire. Kelly had originally met Banti in Venice, when he noted her fine countenance, her great acting ability, and her noble soprano voice. And in 1796 he had sung with her in *Alceste* at the London Opera House by her special request, for she knew that Kelly had studied his rôle under the personal tuition of Gluck himself, as previously related. Banti had been the rage of London in 1794, when Horace Walpole mentions her as "The Banti." The greatest curiosity and excitement prevailed on the occasion of the appearance in the same opera of Banti and Billington, the theatre being crowded to overflowing. The husband of the Italian singer, Signor Zachariah Banti, in order to be sure of securing his wife's share of the receipts, had the doors barricaded, and posted himself, with some friends, at the pay-box. An immense crowd had assembled outside, and when the doors were opened the rush to get in was so great that the barricade was smashed down, and Signor Banti and his money-boxes overthrown before any money was paid. Finding himself at the other end of the auditorium when at last he was able to regain his legs, the anguished husband cried, as he gazed around the crowded theatre: "O Santa Maria! de pit full! de gallery full! all full —and no money in de box. What will my Brigida, my angel wife, say, when I shall have nothing in my box for her?" Kelly relates a somewhat similar contretemps that happened at one of his own benefits, when Madame Catalani was singing for him: "The rush was so great that the doors were broken down, and the pit crammed to excess: the return in money was only £25. Of course great numbers got in to the pit without paying; and though an appeal was made, and a request that those who had not paid would send the price of their admission to the box-office the following day, not a single person sent; they seemed all to be of Falstaff's way of thinking—'They did not like that paying back.'"

Madame Banti was also the mistress of William Taylor, proprietor of the Opera House, and her insatiable demands for money involved him in many financial difficulties, according to Lorenzo Da Ponte. Kelly, too, told Cyrus Redding, apropos of this, an amusing story which Theodore Hook had omitted from Kelly's *Reminiscences*. It was this. William Taylor's house in Cadogan Place was being watched night and day by bailiffs for large debts incurred by Taylor or his mistress, and he would have been arrested by them if he ventured out of his front door. Kelly came to see him, and, hearing that the next-door neighbour also was in debt for a sum of £30, due on taxes, he called on the man and said he would pay that debt if he might be permitted to make a fair-sized opening in the party-wall which divided the attics of the two houses, with the undertaking that all damage would be made good. The man was quite willing, tools were fetched, and an opening in the wall was cut out, and through this Taylor passed into the adjoining house, walked down the stairs, and departed off on the arm of Kelly, almost under the eyes of the bailiffs on guard outside his own dwelling. As Kelly observed, " What interest Hook had in omitting this story, I don't know, unless he feared it might give the bailiffs a hint that might cross and prevent his own escape under like circumstances."

John Ebers stated that Taylor started life as a clerk in the City bank of Snow and Co., and that he said the name and place were too cold for his complexion; but, as Ebers added, after coming to the King's Theatre he was in hot water for life. He was a clever, sharp man, though weak in his relations with Brigida Banti, who could get anything out of him. She was of low origin, and had originally sung in the streets. She is said to have had quite £30,000 from Taylor, and a contemporary print thus speaks of their liaison : " A doting Cicisbeo with a Harraden who had children in every town in Italy, a loving stage-treading pair, whose joint ages might be nearer 120 than 100. . . . The money this dotard spent upon this Signora is incredible."

Taylor was a great practical joker in the style of Theodore Hook. On one occasion he told Mr. Chambers, who had a mortgage on the Opera House, that Michael Kelly, who, he said, was lying at the point of death at Brighton, wished to see him without delay, in order to impart some important business relating to the theatre before he expired. Chambers immediately hired a carriage and four, and travelled with all speed to Brighton. On arriving at the hotel, the first thing he saw was Kelly, not in the agonies of death, but perfectly well, basking on a balcony, with a fine bottle of claret and a pineapple by his side.

On April 30th, 1802, Mrs. Billington took her benefit at Drury Lane in the opera of *Algonah*, the music by Kelly. She had left her husband, the Frenchman Felissent, on account of his violence and ill-treatment, in Venice. To her horror, on entering her dressing-room after the first act of *Algonah* she discovered seated there the dreaded Felissent, who had decided that he could not be separated from his " beloved Bettina," or, rather, from the golden store of English money—£4,000—she was earning in England. Kelly relates that Felissent had been in the commissariat department of Napoleon's armies, and, having laid violent siege to Mrs. Billington's affections, unluckily for her, succeeded. " He was a remarkably handsome man, and (as Mrs. Billington told me) before marriage a most insinuating monster of meekness : but the very first week after their union the dove assumed the fierceness of the hawk. It was said that he used to treat her unmercifully ; and if she dared to complain, plates, dishes, or any other moveable, were thrown at her. Such was *her* story. I never would have any communication with him. How it was managed, I know not, but his stay in this country was very short ; I have reason to believe that he had many *weighty* arguments put to him to hasten his departure. I never saw any woman so much in awe of man as poor Mrs. Billington of him she had married for love."

It would have been better for Mrs. Billington if she had decided never to return to her husband and Italy. However, she retired from the stage in 1811, and went once more to Venice, where she died in 1818, in circumstances of mystery, with suspicions of foul murder attaching to her abominable husband. Such was the sad end of the lovely singer whose rich tones exemplified supremely all the mellifluous art of the Italian operatic school at its zenith, she whose syren voice had enchained the Prince of Wales far more than the attractions of her body.

In the summer of 1803, Mrs. Crouch having now retired from the stage, for her voice had never recovered from the effects of the strange accident when a travelling trunk fell on her throat while seated in her carriage,[1] Kelly proceeded with Mrs.

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[1] See *ante*, p. 220.

Billington on a starring engagement in Liverpool and Edinburgh. For the sake of the *convenances*, and to ameliorate any jealousy Mrs. Crouch might be expected to entertain in the matter and person of so alluring and abandoned a Circe as Mrs. Billington, the brother of the latter, Charles Weichsel, accompanied her and Kelly in their post coach, drawn by four horses, on the journey to the north. Mrs. Billington's fame secured crowded houses during a fortnight, particularly her Mandane in *Artaxerxes*, with the Artabanes of Kelly and the Arbaces of Mrs. Davison, of whom Kelly says it was "really surprising how well that lady sang and acted the part, considering that she had never been accustomed to recitative. I took a great deal of pains to instruct her, and was highly repaid by her assiduity and truly amiable manners. In my intercourse with theatrical ladies, I never met with more equanimity of temper and good nature than in Mrs. Davison. Her mother was then with her, and played the old ladies in comedy and opera extremely well, and bore the character of an excellent parent and kind-hearted woman." It is right to give a little niche of remembrance to such worthy actresses of the old school, appreciated in their lifetime but lacking the temperamental qualities or flamboyant "private" lives which ensure Nell Gwyn, Mrs. Siddons, Mrs. Jordan, and many another, the recognition of far posterity. *En route* from Liverpool to the north, the singers had a quaint experience of Scotch finance :

"We passed through Dunbar, where we dined ; but when we offered to pay the innkeeper his bill, he refused English notes, and informed us that they would be of no use to us on the road, as they would not be taken at any of the inns between Dunbar and Edinburgh. The reason he gave was that a few days previous a gentleman and lady had paid their bill with a forged ten-pound note ; and at all the inns, till they got to Edinburgh, defrayed their expenses by changing forged five and ten pound notes. So that with *quantum sufficit* of bank notes in our pocket we were absolutely in pawn at a little Scotch inn. Weichsel and I went to a banker's in the place (he, by the way, kept a whiskey shop) and told him our situation. He turned out to be a good kind of fellow, and agreed to advance us £25 in *Scotch* bank notes on our depositing £100 English until we returned them. This bargain, singular as it may sound, we were forced to make, and accordingly restored his provincial paper when we got to Edinburgh. When we arrived in the Scotch metropolis it was the time of Leith races, and the place was crowded, as was the theatre nightly."

In Edinburgh, Kelly found some stage friends, Mrs. Esten (later Mrs. Scott Waring) and that renowned exponent of "heavy" parts, Mrs. Powell, previously known as Mrs. Farmer, and subsequently as Mrs. Renaud: Powell and Renaud were actual husbands. Kelly accompanied Mrs. Powell in her carriage to the races. Among the distinguished people on the Sands was the King of France, Louis XVIII, who was at that time residing at Holyrood Palace: "He came up to the carriage in which we were, and discoursed nearly an hour with us, with the most engaging affability," an incident which, of course, gave Kelly extreme gratification, for it was observed by all the brilliant company at the races.

On the way back to London, Mrs. Billington and Kelly sang for two nights at Newcastle by request of the manager of the theatre there, Stephen Kemble, with the customary result of overflowing houses. They had reaped a rich harvest in the north, and Kelly now came under the interested attention of the collectors of income tax, of whom he gives an amusing account:

"In the midst of all the *éclat* and success of this season I had returned my income to the Commissioners of Income Tax at £500 per annum, which it appeared they did not think a sufficient return, and sent me a summons to appear before them on their next day of meeting. In consequence of receiving this I consulted a kind friend, who was my counsellor on all occasions, who advised me if I felt myself justified by the truth to adhere firmly to the amount which I had at first fixed. He promised to accompany me, which he did, and was witness to the following conversation between the Commissioners and myself. 'So, Mr. Kelly,' said one of the men of authority, 'you have returned your income to us at £500 per annum; you must have a very mean opinion of our understandings, Sir, to think that you could induce us to receive such a return when we are aware that your income from your various professional engagements must amount to twice or three times that sum.' 'Sir,' said I, 'I am free to confess I have erred in my return, but vanity was the cause, and vanity is the badge of all my tribe. I have returned myself as having £500 per annum when, in fact, I have not five hundred pence of certain income.' 'Pray, Sir,' said the commissioner, 'are you not stage-manager of the Opera House?' 'Yes, Sir,' said I, 'but there is not even a nominal salary attached to that office. I perform its duties to gratify my love of music.' 'Well, but, Mr. Kelly,' continued my examiner, 'you teach?' 'I do, Sir,' answered I, 'but I have no pupils.' 'I think,' observed another gentleman who had not spoken before, 'that you are an oratorio and concert singer?' 'You are quite right,' said I to my new antagonist, 'but I have no engagement.' 'Well, but at all events,' observed my first inquisitor, 'you have a very good salary at Drury Lane.' 'A very good one indeed, Sir,' answered I, 'but then it is never paid.' 'But you have always a fine benefit, Sir,' said the other, who seemed to know something of theatricals. 'Always, Sir,' was my reply, 'but the expenses attending it are very great, and whatever profit remains after defraying them is mortgaged to liquidate debts incurred by building my Saloon. The fact is, Sir, I am at present very like St. George's Hospital, supported by voluntary contributions, and have even less certain income than I felt sufficiently vain to return.'

"This unaffected exposé made the Commissioners laugh, and the affair ended by their receiving my return.[1] The story is not very dissimilar to one told of the celebrated Horne Tooke, who having returned to some Commissioners under the same Act his income at two hundred pounds per annum, was questioned much in the same manner as myself till at last one of the inquisitors said: 'Mr. Horne Tooke, you are trifling with us sadly; we are aware of the manner in which you live, the servants you keep, the style you maintain; this cannot be done for five times the amount you have returned. What other resources have you?' 'Sir,' said Horne Tooke, 'I have, as I have said, only two hundred pounds a year; whatever else I get, I beg, borrow, or steal, and it is a perfect matter of indifference to me to which of those three sources you attribute my surplus income.' And thus ended the examination."

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[1] This story much amused Sir Walter Scott. See *The Quarterly Review*, June, 1826.

On July 23rd of this year, 1803, there was produced, at the Haymarket Theatre, George Colman's version of *La Folie*, which he entitled *Love Laughs at Locksmiths*, and with Kelly's music it proved to be one of the most popular of pieces, and was frequently revived. Elliston, in the singing part of Captain Beldair, was a great success, while Charles Mathews the elder, as Risk, was always encored for his two songs, "The Farm Yard" and "Miss Bailey." Mathews, indeed, was a supreme comedian, for, like all the best exponents of his art, his humour was akin to pathos. Of him Dr. Doran said, "As a mimic, he has never been excelled in my remembrance. Through the whole range of lower comedy he was supreme; and his M. Malet showed what power this great artist could exercise over the most tender feelings. No comedian ever compelled more hearty laughter, or, when opportunity offered, more abundant tears."

Another operatic star of the first magnitude now arrived in London to contest the supremacy of Billington—the lovely Grassini—and it was arranged that the stellar twain should appear together as a constellation in one opera, and at other times be rival luminaries on alternative nights. Kelly relates:

"In the year 1804 the Opera House was opened by Mr. Francis Goold, who had been a schoolfellow of mine at the Rev. Dr. Burke's academy in Dublin[1]; he had passed the greatest part of his life on the Continent, and was extremely well acquainted with the arts and theatrical matters in particular. He was well suited for the management of an extensive theatre, and knew music scientifically, and was, moreover, a truly honest, friendly man. From the day of his entering on the management until the day of his death I was his stage-manager, his confidential friend, and adviser.

"He had the merit of engaging for his prima donna the celebrated Grassini, who made her first appearance in the serious opera of *La Virgine del Sole;* she possessed a fine counter-tenor voice, the lower tones of which were sublimely pathetic. In the sweet duet composed by Meyer, 'Parte ti lascio,' with Viganoni, she was delightful. The melody of the effective grand chorus, 'Qual orrore,' in the opera was extolled by the amateurs for its peculiar beauty and originality. The production of this melody by Meyer is rather curious as it was recounted to me by Madame Grassini herself. Meyer, while composing the opera of *La Virgine del Sole* at Venice, was at a supper party where a young Englishman was present; after supper there was some singing, and the young Englishman was asked to sing in his turn; he sang the Scotch ballad to O'Keefe's words in the musical entertainment of *Peeping Tom*, 'Pretty Maud, Pretty Maud.' Meyer was so pleased with the melody that he got pen and ink, and having requested to hear it again, wrote it down; and from that simple melody produced the effective chorus in question.

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[1] See *ante*, p. 19.

" Grassini was an admirable actress and a beautiful woman; her merits obtained for her the society and countenance of people of the highest rank in this country. Mrs. Siddons amongst others has often been heard to express her admiration of her acting, and has repeatedly visited the Opera expressly to see her action; and she once told Grassini so. When she was a performer at the theatre of San Carlos at Naples, and a great favourite there in the year 1796, she was honoured by the patronage of His Royal Highness the Duke of Sussex, whose name in the various countries through which he has travelled will be remembered with gratitude by those artists whom he liberally supported and protected. His Royal Highness is a perfect linguist, an excellent judge of music, and sings with taste. I have often had the honour of being admitted into his society, and always found him full of condescending good nature and affability.

" The grand triumph of the Opera House, however, was when Mrs. Billington and Grassini sang together in *Il Ratto di Proserpina*, composed expressly by Winter for those two beautiful women and exquisite performers. The charming duet sung by them, 'Vagi colli,' was always loudly encored; the beautiful trio also sung by them, accompanied by Viganoni, the cavatina 'Che farò senza la madre,' in which Grassini's fine pathos shone so conspicuous, and Mrs. Billington's brilliantly executed air, 'Apri la madre il core,' will ever be remembered by the musical world; indeed, the whole of the opera was admirable, and Winter's *chef-d'œuvre*; he had only three weeks to write it, and to keep his time had the able assistance of his countryman, Mr. Kramer, the excellent master of His Majesty's private band as well as composer. He instrumented a great part of the opera, and in what he did proved himself perfectly competent to the task.

"The attraction of the beautiful Proserpine (Grassini) and her mother, the lovely Ceres (Billington), drew great houses. *Il Ratto di Proserpina* was the only opera in which these theatrical divinities appeared together, for Mr. Goold, contrary to all advice, engaged them on condition that (with the exception of the one opera) they should appear singly on alternate Tuesdays and Saturdays; and it was a *sine qua non* with these goddesses that their Saturdays should be held sacred, for, strange as it may appear (such is the power of fashion), with the same performers and the same opera in the same week, I have known five hundred pounds taken at the doors on the Saturday and the Tuesday's receipts under sixty. If anything were wanting to prove the influence of fashion and how very secondary, after all, the attraction of talent at that theatre is, this fact perhaps would be decisive.

"This silly engagement had, one Tuesday night, nearly shut up the house. It was Mrs. Billington's turn to perform, but she was taken with so severe a hoarseness that she could not sing a note, nor, indeed, leave her bed. Grassini was entreated by Mr. Goold to sing in her stead, but she declared that no power on earth should induce her to do so, as Saturday was her night and not Tuesday. I did all in my power, by every argument, to prevail upon her, but the inexorable syren was deaf to my entreaties. I found there was no method to gain my point but by a *ruse de guerre*, and to fib through thick and thin. Fibbing, as I delicately call it, is a necessary accomplishment for the stage-manager of an Italian Opera House; without it, one of the most difficult and necessary objects could never be attained—I mean keeping the ladies quiet. The art is only to be acquired by practice aided by a certain proportion of impudence, in neither of which I was altogether deficient. For instance, I said upon this occasion, 'My dear Grassini, as manager I ought to prevail upon you to perform, but as a performer myself I enter certainly into your feelings, and think you perfectly right not to sing out of your turn; the Saturday is yours, but what I say to you

I trust you will not repeat to Mr. Goold, as it might be of serious injury to me.' 'Depend upon it, my dear Kelly,' said Grassini, 'I will not; I look upon you by what you have just said to be my sincere friend.' As I was leaving the room I said, 'To be sure it is rather unlucky you do not sing to-night, for this morning a message came from the Lord Chamberlain's Office to announce the Queen's intention to come incog., accompanied by the Princesses, purposely to see you perform, and a *loge grillé* is actually ordered to be prepared for them, where they can perfectly see and hear without being seen by the audience; but, of course, I'll step myself to the Lord Chamberlain's Office and state that you are confined to your bed, and express your mortification at disappointing the Royal Party.' 'Stop, Kelly,' said she, 'what you now say alters the case; if Her Majesty Queen Charlotte wishes to see *La Virgine del Sole*, and to hear me, I am bound to obey Her Majesty's commands; go, then, to Goold and tell him I *will* sing.'

"She accordingly did perform on the Tuesday. When I went into her dressing-room after the first act, Her Majesty not having arrived, Grassini suspecting that I had made up a story to cajole her, taxed me with the trick, and when I confessed it she took it very good naturedly and joined in the laugh at her own credulity. The feeling of respect to the wishes of our excellent Queen Charlotte which she evinced did her infinite credit."

In July, 1804, Kelly produced at the Haymarket his musical piece called *The Hunter of the Alps*, in which Elliston made a great success. In this play also appeared Mrs. Crouch's little nephew, Harry Horrebow, the five-year-old-son of her sister, Sophia Phillips, who had married, while still very young, Captain Horrebow, of the Danish naval East India Service.[1] She went to India with her husband, but his ship was wrecked, and Mrs. Horrebow made a stage appearance at Calcutta, subsequently returning to England. Kelly says that young Harry Horrebow was excellent in his by-play with Elliston, and that he also performed in ballet, one of these pieces being entitled *Aggression*, produced at Covent Garden. Kelly relates that it owed much to the fine acting of Mrs. St. Leger: "Little Harry was her son in the piece; she held him aloft in one hand, while she fought her assailant with a tomahawk. The whole of the action was picturesque and beautiful, and always ardently applauded. Harry's performance in one scene, in which he was preparing his bow and arrow for action, was as beautiful as anything ever seen on the stage."

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[1] The Horrebows had an elder son Peter, born in 1787. See *ante*, p. 220. He later became a midshipman in the Royal Navy. Harry Horrebow was born in 1798.

Before the production of *The Hunter of the Alps*, it was rumoured that organised interruption was intended on the first night. Kelly happened to mention the report to an excitable Irish friend, who took fire at the bare mention of such underhand attacks. "Just give me," said he, "half a dozen orders, and I'll send in a few regular Garry Owen boys, who shall take their shillelahs under their arms; and we'll see who'll be afther trying to hiss your music." Kelly accordingly supplied his Hibernian supporter with the necessary passes. During the performance he was surprised to hear occasionally the discordant sound of hisses from the region where sat his claque, though the applause predominated. After the play was over, Kelly took some of his friends to sup with him at his house in Pall Mall, and among the guests was Dimond, the author of the piece. In the midst of the merriment, in rushed the excitable Irish leader of the claque, vociferating in exultation: "Here we are, Mick, here we are! We are the boys! We did it, Mick! Oh, Sir, the music is movingly beautiful, and when the fellow in green howled about the Hill of Howth [a hunting chorus, "Hilloa ho"] we made no small noise. Beautiful indeed was the tune: but as for the play—may I never stir if ever I saw such stuff and botheration; by my honour and soul I think nobody hissed the speaking part half so much as we did." It had never occurred to the worthy man that the success of the play and the music were complementary: on the contrary, he thought that by damning the play all the success would be attributed to the music. Poor Dimond, the author, bore this unflattering explanation with very good humour; and all the party washed down the subject with appropriate draughts of "that universal panacea, whiskey punch."

For the season of 1805, Kelly produced at the King's Theatre a new opera by Winter entitled *L'Amore Fraterno*, in which Mrs. Billington sang with her usual fascination, ably supported by the two great tenors, Braham and Viganoni. Winter also composed the music for the grand ballet of *Achilles*, in which appeared D'Egville, the celebrated ballet-master, and the handsome Deshayes. For Grassini was produced *Gli Orazi ed i Curiazi*, the music of which, Kelly says, provided the finest serious opera ever composed by Cimarosa. It "was delightful, and drew crowded houses to the King's Theatre, as it did at Venice, where it had originally been produced. In my opinion, the acting of Grassini in this opera was almost as fine as Mrs. Siddons's : higher praise she could not wish for ; the passage where she exclaimed, 'O, Orazio, mio bene,' was positively heart-rending."

The prodigal length of the operas and ballets, and the difficulty of getting the leading ladies to be ready to time, resulted in the performances not being over until past midnight. On Saturdays this caused the desecration of the early hours of the Sabbath in the opinion of the Bishop of London,[1] who seems to have been as meddlesome a busybody as one of the earlier Puritan inquisitors. Thus Kelly tells the consequences of the Bishop's interference in the affairs of the Opera :

" The Bishop of London sent to inform me that if the curtain did not drop before the twelfth hour the license should be taken away, and the house shut up. Against his fiat there was no appeal, and many nights have I been obliged to order the dropping of the curtain in the midst of an interesting scene in the ballet. This for a few nights passed without any notice being taken of it by the subscribers and the public ; but on Saturday, the 15th of June (oh ! fatal night !) the demon of discord appeared with all his terrors in this hitherto undisturbed region of harmony. The curtain fell before twelve o'clock, just as Deshayes and Parisot were dancing a popular *pas de deux*. This was the signal for the sports to begin ; a universal outcry of 'Raise the curtain ! Finish the ballet !' resounded from all parts of the house ; hissing, hooting, yelling (in which most of the ladies of quality joined) commenced. The ballet-master, D'Egville, was called for and asked, 'Why he allowed the curtain to drop before the

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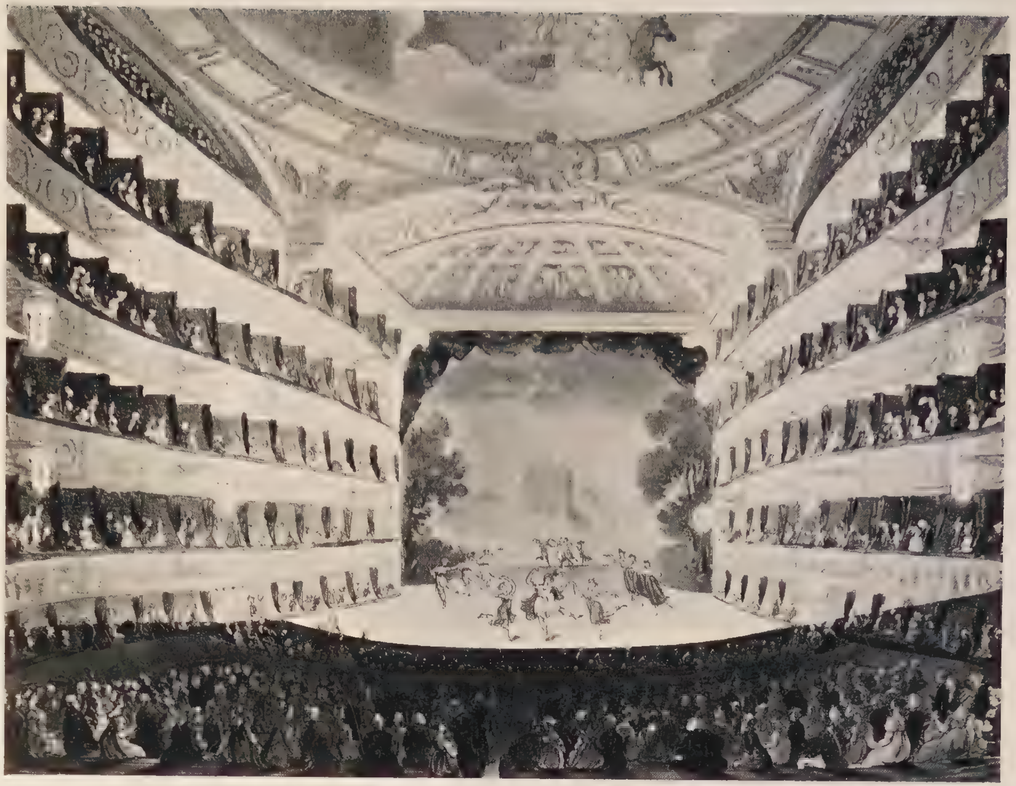
[1] Beilby Porteus (1731–1808), Bishop of London, 1787–1808, and formerly Bishop of Chester. He was one of the early members of the Evangelical School and his Calvinistic views made him opposed to the theatre in any form. He was also an early patron of the Church Missionary Society and the British and Foreign Bible Society.



INTERIOR OF THE KING'S THEATRE, THE OPERA HOUSE IN THE HAYMARKET, 1809

From the picture by Rowlandson and Pugin

conclusion of the ballet ?' He affirmed that he had directions from me to do so. I was then called upon the stage, and received a volley of hisses, yellings, etc. I stood it all, like brick and mortar ; but at last, thinking to appease them, I said the truth was that an order had been received from the Bishop of London to conclude the performance before midnight. Some person, from the third tier of boxes, who appeared to be a principal spokesman, called out, 'You know, Kelly, that you are telling a lie.' I turned round very coolly, and looking up at the box from whence the lie came, I said, 'You are at a very convenient distance ; come down upon the stage, and use that language again—if you dare !'

"This appeal was received by the audience with a loud burst of applause, and a universal cry of 'Bravo, bravo, Kelly ; well replied. Turn him out ! Turn the fellow out of the boxes !' The gentleman left the box, but did not think proper to make his appearance on the stage. This was a lucky turn as it regarded myself, but did not appease the rioters ; for finding their mandate for drawing up the curtain and finishing the ballet not obeyed, they threw all the chairs out of the boxes into the pit, tore up the benches, broke the chandeliers, jumped into the orchestra, smashed the pianoforte, and continued their valorous exploits by breaking all the instruments of the poor unoffending performers. Having achieved deeds so worthy of a polished nation, and imagining no more mischief could be done, they quitted the scene of their despoliation with shouts of victory ; but there was a finale to the drama which they did not expect. Mr. Goold identified some of the ring-leaders, and commenced actions against them for damages, which cost them many hundreds of pounds. Mr. Goold gave up the actions (for, as Gay says, 'Goold from Law could take out the sting') on condition of their acknowledging their ill-behaviour and amply repaying those who had been injured."

The damage done during the riot was estimated at £5,000. The disturbance continued until half-past two on Sunday morning, when the military were called in to clear out the rioters. Despite these drastic measures, the unruly section of London playgoers in those days broke out into great excesses four years later when the famous O. P. Riots—based on the demand for " Old Prices " of admission—were nightly occurrences at Covent Theatre during the last quarter of 1809, and again in September, 1810. Kemble was insulted when he attempted to speak, the Riot Act was read, the Jubilee of the Riots was celebrated, and medals were struck in commemoration of the victory of mob tyranny, one of these representing Kemble as an ass riden by John Bull, who flogs him with two whips. The O. P. Riots mainly consisted of shoutings, cat-calls (considered a suitable form of insult to the prima donna, Madame Catalani), with the added din of bells, horns, trumpets, and rattles. The baize was torn off the cheaper seats, but otherwise the damage done was in no way comparable with the destruction recorded by Kelly at the Opera House in 1805.

Amid all his success and fame at this period, Kelly's happiness was shadowed by the failing health of Mrs. Crouch and the sad conviction that soon he would lose her. She had retired from the stage in 1801, making her last appearance on May 14th of that year as Celia in *As You Like It*, on the occasion of his benefit.[1] One of her admirers has recorded that " her appearance was that of a meteor ; it dazzled from excess of brilliancy every spectator." And now the meteor was swiftly fading from sight. She was seen no more in Society, and her last years were spent mainly at Brighton, where Kelly attended her whenever he was free from his professional duties. At last, as the year 1805 declined, she grew worse. She was attended at the house on West Cliff, Brighton, by Sir Charles Blicke,[2] Dr. Bankhead, and Kelly's friend, Sir Matthew Tierney (later physician to George IV). Kelly, it is recorded, never left the house, for his chivalrous devotion continued to the end. He alludes but briefly to the saddest experience of his life :

" When her immediate danger was known, her sister, Mrs. Horrebow, arrived from London, and our faithful and attached friend, Mr. Rose, the merchant, with whose family we had been for many years on the most affectionate and confidential terms. With him she at all times communicated unreservedly, and to him confided her cares and anxiety for my future prosperity ; for she was utterly incapable of a selfish feeling. She arranged everything relative to her affairs and her funeral as if she had been going a journey, and was to return and reap the benefit of her care. At length the dreadful hour arrived. . . . I hope that I, who knew her best, may be permitted to say that had she been so fortunate as to meet with a husband capable of appreciating and cherishing her estimable qualities and superior talents she would have lived and died without a blemish on her fame."

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[1] Her last regular appearances had been in *Pizarro* in 1799.

[2] Sir Charles Blicke (1745–1815), Governor of the Royal College of Surgeons.

That was the only allusion Kelly ever made to Mrs. Crouch's failings.[1] She died at the age of forty-two of "an internal mortification," after periods of terrible pain and mental derangement.

Some curious details of Mrs. Crouch's death are given in her Memoirs: "Her afflicted friends, as they watched anxiously over her, observed with unutterable anguish her 'noble and most sovereign reason, like sweet bells jangled, out of tune and harsh'; and beheld her 'unmatched form blasted' by disease. In her intervals of reason, which were long and frequent, she was perfectly sensible of her approaching dissolution; she caressed her little nephew, Henry Horrebow, whom she had taken with her to Brighton, and gave him good advice. She sent to town for a will, which had been written about three years before. . . . She said that it had been her intention to be buried in the ground where her father lay, but that as it pleased God she should die at Brighton, she requested to be buried there, and repeated the words, 'Where the tree falls, there let it lie.' She particularly desired to be wrapped in woollen according to the established law of the country, as her beloved relatives had been, that her coffin might be all black, and that neither that nor her shroud might be flounced or trimmed, and that her funeral might be plain and private, like her father's. Thus did she evince her natural serenity of mind, and the excellence of her understanding, even when her soul was fluttering in the last painful struggle of mortality. She lingered for three weeks between reason and delirium, calmness and agony, life and death, until the 2nd of October, 1805, when she expired in the forty-second year of her age. Mrs. Crouch was not opened."

She was buried in the graveyard of the old parish church of Brighton, St. Nicholas, on the hill. One can picture the scene as the sad procession wended from the south porch of the church along the flagged path to the site of the grave, which immediately adjoins the outer wall of the north-eastern portion of the burial-ground; there is the weeping Kelly, clad in his long mourning cloak, his beaver hat swathed with yards of floating crape, with his memories of "the lovely songstress," their many triumphs together on the stage and the happy years of their home life. Over the grave Kelly had a monument erected to her memory, bearing this inscription:

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[1] See *ante*, pp. 142–145.

Anna Maria Crouch,
during many years a Performer at Drury Lane Theatre.
She combined with the purest Taste as a Singer the most elegant simplicity as an Actress: beautiful almost beyond parallel in her Person, she was equally distinguished by the Powers of her Mind.
They enabled her, when she quitted the Stage,
to gladden Life by the Charms of her Conversation,
and refine it by her Manners.
She was born April 20th, 1763, and died
October 2nd, 1805.
This Stone
is Inscribed to her beloved Memory by him whom she
esteemed the most faithful of her Friends.

The iron railings round the tomb are falling now to ruin, but the epitaph can still be read, and the simple pathos of its final words rings as true to-day as on that sad October afternoon when the mourners were gathered around the spot ere ever the years were flown. "And they are gone; ay, ages long ago."

The death of Mrs. Crouch deeply affected Kelly in both his personal and professional relationships, for from this date he took a dislike to appearing on the stage, and made arrangements to retire as soon as his engagements permitted. He relates:

"I left Brighton with an aching heart, and went to my friend, Rose, at Richmond, where I received a letter from Lord Guilford inviting me to Wroxton Abbey (near Banbury); to such an invitation, so warmly pressed, there was but one reply; and I set off for that delightful spot, where I knew consolation and kindness awaited me. I wrote thence to Mr. Graham, then at the head of the Board of Management of Drury Lane, to say that I could not return to the theatre for some time; and received a very kind letter in reply, conveying permission to absent myself as long as I thought fit. I remained at Wroxton Abbey for two months. On leaving the Earl of Guilford's, I went to pass a week with the Marquis of Ormonde,[1] at Ditchley, in Oxfordshire, which his Lordship rented of Lord Dillon. The Marquis was a great lover of the Drama, and well versed in all our dramatic poets. The Marchioness was a most accomplished woman. Every kindness and hospitality were shewn to me by my noble host and hostess, who were too suddenly, and shortly after, snatched from this world themselves."

The two months having elapsed, Kelly returned to London and played Henry in *The Deserter*. He was received with kindness and sympathy by the audience, but, as previously stated, he had resolved to quit, as soon as possible, the Profession now that his fair companion in so many triumphs on the stage was lost to him. But he continued his musical work at Drury Lane and the Opera House. For production at Covent Garden, too, in January, 1806, he composed the music of *We Fly by Night, or Long Stories*, written by his friend George Colman the younger, from the basis of a French piece, *Les Deux Postes*, which Kelly had seen at the Théâtre Français, with both the Baptistes in the cast, their parts in London being taken respectively by Munden and Farley. Liston, Fawcett, Miss Davies, and Miss Tyrer (who married Liston) also appeared in this play, and, as the two ladies had been pupils of Mrs. Crouch and Kelly, the latter naturally felt an interest in their success, for *We Fly by Night* had a long run. This same year, 1806, Kelly composed *The Forty Thieves* for Drury Lane; and *Adrian and Orrila* for Covent Garden, in collaboration with Attwood. George Frederick Cooke (1756–1811), originally a printer's apprentice, was to play the Prince in *Adrian and Orrila*, but, as usual with this actor, he caused trouble by reason of his alcoholic intemperance. Kelly relates:

" The very deuce he had liked to have played with it, for on the morning of the day on which the piece was to be performed he came to rehearsal so intoxicated that he could scarcely stand. Both the author (Dimond) and myself were on the stage, alarmed, as may well be imagined, for the fate of a play, the principal serious character of which was to be performed by a man dead drunk. We were determined not to let our play be acted. Mr. Kemble, on the contrary (who then was stage-manager as well as co-proprietor with Mr. Harris), insisted that the play should be done at all risks. Mr. Harris was sent for to decide. In the interim, Cooke was pouring out a volley of abuse against Kemble, calling him ‘ Black Jack,’ etc., all which Kemble bore with Christian patience and without any reply. At length Mr. Harris, with his faithful ally in all emergencies, the late James Brandon, the box book-keeper, on seeing Cooke’s situation, decided that the play should not be performed on that night but that Kemble should make an apology to the audience on the plea of Cooke’s sudden indisposition, which Kemble refused to do. ‘ When Greek meets Greek, then comes the tug of war.’

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[1] The first Marquis of Ormonde (1770–1820). His wife, Anne Clarke, died in 1817.

“ Harris declared he would have the play changed. Kemble, on the contrary, was as peremptory to have it performed, and vowed that, if it were changed under the pretence of Cooke’s indisposition, he would go forward to the audience and inform them of the true cause of their disappointment. Harris said, ‘ Mr. Kemble, don’t talk to me in this manner. I am chief proprietor here and will have whatever orders I give obeyed. I shall always remember Kemble’s countenance when, with the greatest calmness, he replied, ‘ Sir, you are a proprietor, so am I. I borrowed a sum of money to come into this property. How am I to repay those who lent me that money if you, from ill-placed lenity towards an individual who is repeatedly from intoxication disappointing the public, choose to risk the dilapidation of the theatre and thereby cause my ruin ? By heavens, I swear the play shall be acted.’

“ Words were getting to a very high pitch when Brandon coaxed Cooke into his house, put him to bed, and applied napkins steeped in cold water to his head in the hopes of sobering him. He slept from twelve till five o’clock, when he took some very strong coffee, which brought him to his senses, and he consented to play the part, and considering all circumstances I was struck with astonishment to see how finely he acted it

To be sure, he had nearly made one trifling omission, namely, cutting out the whole plot of the piece. And had it not been for the promptness and presence of mind of the then Miss Smith (the present Mrs. Bartley), who played the character (and finely she did play it) of Madame Clermont, he would have succeeded in doing so. 'Oh! that man should put an enemy into their mouths to steal away their brains.' No man when sober was better conducted or possessed more affability of manners blended with sound sense and good-nature than Cooke; he had a fine memory and was extremely well informed. I asked him, when he was acting at Brighton one day, to dine with me and Mrs. Crouch, and we were delighted with his conversation and gentleman-like deportment. He took his wine cheerfully, and as he was going away I urged him to have another bottle. His reply was, 'Not one drop more. I have taken as much as I ought to take, I have passed a delightful evening, and should I drink any more wine I might prove a disagreeable companion, therefore, good night,' and away he went. Nor could I then prevail upon him to stop. In the memorable time of the O.P. Riot,[1] some of the actors belonging to Covent Garden seemed to enjoy the disagreeable situation in which Kemble, as manager, stood. I was one night in Covent Garden Theatre, when one of them absolutely and roundly asserted that Kemble was but an indifferent actor. Cooke was in the green-room at the time, and I said, 'What do you think of the assertions of those gentlemen, Mr. Cooke; do you think Kemble an indifferent actor?' 'No, sir,' he replied; 'I think him a very great one; and those who say the contrary are envious men, and not worthy, as actors, to wipe his shoes.' It gave me unspeakable pleasure to hear him give so liberal an opinion of my esteemed friend, even though the expression of it was somewhat of the coarsest."

In the season of 1806, Naldi, the celebrated buffo singer, made his début in London at the Opera House, in *Le Duc Nozze ed un sol Marito*, with much success, for he was both an excellent musician and a fine comic actor. He was also an extremely generous man. While he was in London, the once famous bass singer, Morelli,[2] was discharged, and owing to a consuming passion for gambling in the lottery he was reduced to beggary. Naldi, until the day of his death, supplied Morelli with every necessity of life, and gave him a weekly pension of two guineas by way of pocket money. Naldi had been a lawyer of considerable eminence at Bologna and an amateur singer, but the Revolution obliged him to quit his native city and earn his living by the use of his powerful voice. He had the greatest hatred for the French nation as the despoilers of his country, and not even the most tempting offers would ever induce him to sing at the Opera in Paris. For long, nothing would persuade him even to visit Paris: yet, strange to say, when business connected with his affections decided him to enter the hated capital, he met his death there under extraordinary circumstances. Years before, when singing in Venice, he had met and fallen violently in love with the beautiful dancer, Madame Vigano, and they proceeded to Lisbon to fulfil an engagement there. Madame Vigano had a daughter, whom Naldi "loved as his own child"; and it was to witness her début in Paris that unluckily decided him to break his vow never to enter the accursed place. There, one day, just before dinner, at the house of his friend Garcia,[1] in the year 1821, he was demonstrating how to cook by steam on a portable apparatus. Something went wrong with the then primitive machinery of the stove, there was an explosion, and Naldi was instantaneously killed.

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[1] See *ante*, pp. 347–348.

[2] See *ante*, p. 84.

On December 13th, 1806, the great singer, Angelica Catalani (1779–1849), made her début in London in *La Semiramide*. She was born near Ancona, and first sang in public at Venice in 1797, though from her seventh year people had flocked to hear her sing at the convent of Santa Lucia, Rome, where she was educated. Her appearances in opera were a series of triumphs for thirty years, and her gains immense. In London for her first four months' season she received, it is said, nearly £10,000. She exemplified the power of great gifts allied to art and, above all, temperament. She was the ideal diva, with her imposing, queenly figure, fine face, and brilliancy and vast volume of voice. As Kelly truly says:

"Madame Catalani's personification of Semiramide was a powerful effort of the scenic art—she looked beautiful and a queen; her songs were given in a manner which electrified her audience. She possesses, in truth, what the Italians call the *novanta nove*—i.e. the ninety-nine. When a singer possesses a superior fine voice, the Italians say he, or she, has got the ninety-nine points out of the hundred to make a fine singer. Her reception by a crowded audience was enthusiastic."

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[1] Manuel Garcia (1775–1832), the great tenor. His elder daughter, Maria, was the celebrated singer Malibran.

Frederick Jones, the proprietor of the Dublin Theatre, came over to engage Catalani to sing there. He also engaged Kelly, Morelli, and others to appear with her in the operas of *Semiramide* and *Il Fanatico per la Musica*, the agreements being signed in Kelly's Saloon in Pall Mall. So the party set off for Ireland, accompanied also by Catalani's husband, a Frenchman named Valabrégue (or Valebrique), who had been attached to the Embassy in Lisbon at the time of their marriage. Kelly relates:

"M. Valebrique, Madame Catalani's husband, was kind enough to offer me a seat in their travelling-carriage to Dublin, which I accepted. I was their guest throughout the whole journey, which was really delightful; indeed, their attentions on this and every other occasion can never be forgotten by me. I always found M. Valebrique a very good-natured man; aware, certainly, that he possessed an inestimable gem in the splendid talents of his wife. He was a strict guardian of those talents, and very properly turned them to the best advantage for their lovely possessor. Of Madame Catalani herself, I could relate numberless traits of goodness; no woman was ever more charitable or kind-hearted; and as for the quality of her mind, I never knew a more perfect child of nature. She was delighted with the beauties of Wales, and I remember was particularly struck by the Vale of Llangollen. At Bangor, she heard the Welsh harp for the first time. The old blind harper of the house was in the kitchen; thither she went, and seemed delighted with the wild and plaintive music which he played. But when he struck up a Welsh jig, she started up before all the servants in the kitchen, and danced as if she were wild. I thought she never would have finished; and, on quitting the kitchen, gave the harper two guineas.

"When we arrived in Dublin, she was received and caressed in every society. The concerts at the Rotunda, which I conducted, and in which I sang, were nightly crowded. The orchestra was ably led by my friend, Tom Cooke, whose versatility and genius, in my opinion, cannot too highly be appreciated. One morning, at a rehearsal at the Rotunda, Madame Catalani was so ill with a sick headache that she could not rehearse her song; and, as it was extremely difficult for the orchestra, she begged of me to have it rehearsed by the band. Cooke asked me for the part from which Madame Catalani sang; I gave it him. He placed it on one side of his music desk, and on the other his first violin part from which he was to play; and, to my great astonishment, Madame Catalani's, and that of all present, he sang every note of the song, at the same time playing his own part on the violin, as leader; thus killing, as it were, two birds with one stone, with the greatest ease. The song was one of Portogallo's, in manuscript, and had never been out of Madame Catalani's hands; therefore it was impossible that he could have seen it previously; it was full of difficult divisions of which he did not miss one. Had I not been an eye-witness of this extraordinary exhibition, I could not, as a musical man, have believed it.

"The prices at the theatre on the nights Catalani performed were raised to half a guinea for the pit and the boxes, and five shillings for the gallery. At the pianoforte sat my old, revered, and early teacher, Dr. Cogan. Madame Catalani was received and hailed by the Irish audience with rapturous applause. She sang divinely, both in the serious and comic operas. I always acted with her, and had a hearty reception from my generous countrymen. I had the honour of dining with her and her husband at the Earl of Harrington's,[1] Commander-in-Chief; amongst others whom I had the pleasure of meeting at his Lordship's were Mr. W. Browne, of Castle Browne, whom I first met at Venice; and Major Kelly, who was then Lord Harrington's aide-de-camp, and whose gallantry at the battle of Waterloo will long be remembered and duly appreciated by his country. I was particularly honoured by the notice of

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[1] The third Earl of Harrington (1753–1829). He married Jane, daughter and co-heir of Sir John Fleming, Bart., of Brompton Park, Middlesex, an estate now covered by the buildings of the Victoria and Albert Museum and the adjoining residential streets (see also p. 187). Commander-in-Chief in Ireland, 1805–12.

His Grace the Duke of Richmond, then Lord Lieutenant. When, accompanied by the Duchess and family, His Grace honoured the Opera with his presence, it was my duty, as director, to light the Vice-Regal party to their box, as they came in state. His Grace was particularly kind in his conversation and remarks ; and at the conclusion of the opera, when I again lighted them to their carriages, Her Grace the Duchess would not permit me to attend them beyond the box. I had the honour of being invited to the Lodge, at the Phœnix Park, and there found the Viceroy the same accomplished gentleman I knew him at Vienna, when he was the gay and lively Captain Lennox."[1]

This period, 1807, was the crown of Kelly's professional career, for he was starring in his native city with the greatest operatic artist, Catalani, of the time ; but more than the musical triumph—of which, as I have said, since Mrs. Crouch's death he was weary—he appreciated the social honours. His naïf delight in the society of the great again peeps out in his description, just quoted, of the gracious reception he received from the Lord Lieutenant and his wife ; but, apart from the fact that he, the son of the wine-merchant of Mary Street, was an honoured guest at the Vice-Regal Lodge, there was, in retrospect, for him almost a part in history to have thus known that Duke and Duchess of Richmond who were host and hostess on that historic occasion when " there was a sound of revelry by night " —revelry quenched in the thunders of Waterloo.

While in Dublin, Kelly went to dine with John Philpot Curran at his pretty place near Rathfarnham, where the Master of the Rolls was somewhat recovering his saturnine humour after the agitations and dangers of four years earlier, when Robert Emmet had been in love with his daughter, Sara Curran, ere he perished on the gallows after his abortive rebellion. Among the guests at Curran's was the lawyer, Leonard MacNally, who had betrayed Emmet and the United Irishmen. He was the author of *Robin Hood* and other plays, but his claim to remembrance is the song, *The Lass of Richmond Hill*

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[1] The fourth Duke of Richmond (1764–1819), Lord Lieutenant of Ireland (1807–13), married Charlotte, daughter of the fourth Duke of Gordon. This was the Duchess of Richmond who gave the famous ball at Brussels on the eve of Quatre Bras in 1815.

(which was addressed to his second wife). MacNally had come under the lash of Curran's coarse tongue, so it is strange to find him still on friendly terms after the episode in question. Thus MacNally was very lame, and extremely sensitive concerning his limp. At the time of the Irish Rebellion, he was seized with military ardour, and determined to join the lawyers' volunteer corps which was then being formed in Dublin. Meeting Curran, MacNally said, " My dear friend, these are not times for a man to be idle ; I am resolved to enter the Lawyers' Corps, and follow the camp." " You follow the camp, my little limb of the law," replied Curran ; " tut, tut, renounce the idea : you never can be a soldier and a disciplinarian." " And why not, Mr. Curran ? " asked MacNally. " For this reason," said Curran ; " the moment you were ordered to march, you would *halt*."

At Curran's table MacNally told an amusing story in illustration of the Irishman's tendency to get into a quarrel, metaphorically trailing his coat on the ground :

" The night my opera of *Robin Hood* was brought out at Covent Garden Theatre, a young Irish friend of mine, on his first visit to London, was seated on the second seat in the front boxes ; on the front row were two gentlemen, who, at the close of the first act, were saying how much they liked the opera, and that it did much credit to Mrs. Cowley,[1] who wrote it. On hearing this, my Irish friend got up, and, tapping one of them on the shoulder, said to him : ' Sir, *you* say that this opera was written by Mrs. Cowley ; now *I* say it was not : this opera was written by Leonard MacNally, Esq., Barrister at Law, of No. 5, Pump Court, in the Temple. Do you take my word for it ? ' ' Most certainly, sir,' replied the astonished gentleman ; ' and I feel very much obliged for the information you have so politely given me.' ' Umph ! very well, sir,' said he, and sat down.

" At the end of the second act, the Irishman got up, and again accosted the same gentleman, saying, ' Sir, upon your honour, as a gentleman, are you in your own mind perfectly satisfied that Leonard MacNally, Esq., Barrister at Law, of No. 5, Pump Court, in the Temple, has actually written this opera, and not Mrs. Cowley?' 'Most perfectly persuaded of it, sir,' said the gentleman, bowing. 'Then, sir,' said the young Irishman, 'I wish you a good night'; but just as he was leaving the box, he turned to the gentleman whom he had been addressing, and said, 'Pray, sir, permit me to ask, is your friend there convinced that this opera was written by Mr. MacNally, Barrister at Law, of No. 5, Pump Court, in the Temple?' 'Decidedly, sir, we are both fully convinced of the correctness of your statement.' 'Oh, then, if that is the case, I have nothing more to say,' said the Hibernian, 'except that if you had not both assured me you were so, neither of you would be sitting quite so easy on your seats as you do now.'"

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[1] Hannah Cowley (1743–1809), author of many plays, including *The Belle's Stratagem*, 1782. As " Anna Matilda " contributed verses to the *The World*.

In August of the following year, 1808, Kelly, in conformance with a promise he had made to Catalani, accompanied the great singer to Dublin again, though his final appearance at Drury Lane had already taken place.[1] The Signori Siboni and Spagnoletti were also of the company which sang in the two grand operas of *La Mitridate* and *La Didone Abbandonata*. The latter, Kelly says, was Catalani's greatest triumph both as singer and actress. He himself sang the pious Æneas. The company went on to Cork, to give six performances, to the delight of the inhabitants, who were passionately fond of music. In this city, Kelly discovered a new and original relative:

"Walking on the Parade on the second morning of my arrival with Mr. Townsend, proprietor of *The Correspondent* newspaper, he pointed out a very fine-looking elderly gentleman standing at the club-house door, and told me that he was one of the most eccentric men in the world, his name was O'Reilly; he had served many years in the Irish Brigade in Germany and Prussia, where he had been distinguished as an excellent officer. Mr. Townsend added, 'We reckon him here a great epicure, and he piques himself on being a great judge of the culinary art as well as of wines. His good-nature and pleasantry have introduced him to the best society, particularly among the Roman Catholics, where he is always a welcome guest. He speaks German, French, and Italian fluently, and constantly, while speaking English with a determined Irish brogue, mixes all these languages in every sentence. It is immaterial to him whether the persons he is talking to understand him or not, on he goes, stop him who can. He is a great friend of Frederick Jones,[1] and it is an absolute fact that Jones took such a liking to him the first day he came to dine with him that he made him stay at his house all night, and he has lived with him ever since, that is to say for seven years. Jones now never comes to Cork, but sends the Captain down when the Dublin company perform here. He is extremely useful, keeps a strict look-out for everything that concerns his friend's interests, and is a perfect Cerberus among his door-keepers at the theatre, but let us cross over and I will introduce you; I am sure you will be pleased with him.

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[1] See *ante*, p. 306.

" I was accordingly presented to him. No sooner had the noble Captain shaken me heartily by the hand than he exclaimed, '*Bon jour, mon cher Mic, je suis bien aise de vous voir*, as we say in France. *J'étois fâche* that I missed meeting you when you was last in Dublin, but I was obliged to go to the County Galway to see a brother officer who formerly served with me in Germany, as *herlick à carle*, as we say in German, as ever smelt gunpowder. By the god of war, *il est brave comme son épée, c'est à dire* as his sword. Now, tell me how go on your brother Joe and your brother Mark; your brother Pat, poor fellow, lost his life I know in the East Indies, but *c'est la fortune de la guerre* and he died *avec honneur*. Your sister Mary, too, how is she? By my soul, she is as good a hearted, kind creature as ever lived, but *entre nous soit dit* she is rather plain *ma non è bella quel ch' è bella è bella quel che piace*, as we say in Italian.' 'Now, Captain,' said I, 'after the flattering encomiums you have bestowed on my sister's beauty, may I ask how you became so well acquainted with my family concerns?' '*Parbleu!* my dear Mic,' said the Captain, 'well I may be, for sure *your* mother and *my* mother were sisters.'

" On comparing notes, I found that such was the fact. When I was a boy, and before I left Dublin for Italy, I remember my mother often mentioning a nephew of hers of the name of O'Reilly, who had been sent to Germany when quite a lad (many years before) to a relation of his father who was in the Irish Brigade at Prague. Young O'Reilly entered the regiment as a cadet; he afterwards went into the Prussian service, but my mother heard no more of him. The Captain told me furthermore that he had been cheated some years before out of a small property which his father left him in the county Meath, by a man whom he thought his best friend. 'However,' said the Captain, 'I had my satisfaction by calling him out and putting a bullet through his hat, but, nevertheless, all the little property that was left me is gone. But *grâce au ciel*, I have never sullied my reputation nor injured mortal, and for that "the gods will take care of Cato." In all my misfortunes, cousin, I have never parted with the family sword, which was never drawn in a dirty cause, and there it hangs now in a little cabin which I have got in the county Meath. Should ever Freddy Jones discard me, I will end my days in *riposo è pace* with the whole universal world.'

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[1] Proprietor of the Dublin Theatre.

"I have often thought if Mr. Sheridan or Colman had been acquainted with this worthy yet eccentric man he would have served them as a model for an Irish character, and how Jack Johnstone would have acted it. One of the Captain's eccentricities I had nearly forgotten to mention: he was never without lemons, shalots, and Cayenne pepper in a case in his pocket, which he always produced at table. The lemons he said were to squeeze over his oysters *â la Francaise*. The shalots for a beef-steak *â la Anglaise*, and the Cayenne for every dish foreign and domestic. Nor should I in justice to my relation omit a joke of his which is almost as piquant as his sauce. One day he was in the streets of Clonmel when the Tipperary militia were marching out of that town; their Colonel's father had formerly been a miller, and amassed a large fortune, which he had bequeathed to the Colonel himself. O'Reilly, seeing the gallant officer at the head of the corps, exclaimed, 'By the god of war, here comes Marshal *Sacks* with the flour of Tipperary at his back.'

"I quitted Cork for Limerick with gratitude for the many favours bestowed upon me by its warm-hearted inhabitants. I was delighted to see how the place had improved since I last saw it. The new town is beautiful. We had only time to perform four nights there; the prices of the theatre were doubled, the houses overflowed every night, all the nobility of the county of

Clare poured into the city, and the hotels and inns were crowded to excess. I passed a delightful week there, and my cousin the Captain seemed as much at home in Limerick as he had been at Cork.

"On our last night in Limerick, just in the middle of a most impressive and beautiful duet which Catalani and I were singing in *Didone*, and at a moment when the whole house was wrapt in attention, a man vociferated from the gallery, 'Mr. Kelly, will you be good enough to favour us with "Oh! Thou Wert Born to Please Me?"' This unexpected request produced a loud laugh from the audience. Catalani asked me what the meaning of it was; I answered that it was nothing but a peculiar manner of applauding. My gallery friend, I suppose, recollected poor Mrs. Crouch and myself singing 'Oh! Thou Wert Born to Please Me,' at the same theatre many years previous, and wished to hear it again.[1]

"After concluding my engagement at Limerick we returned to Dublin, where we were to perform six nights previous to our quitting Ireland. Having no occasion for rehearsals, I used to visit the environs every day.

"One morning, riding with an old friend of mine, we saw near the Black Rock two strapping shirtless fellows, real *sans culottes*, on the back of a poor half-starved horse which seemed to be sinking under the weight, hardly able to crawl along the road. On my friend saying what a pity it was to load the poor beast with two outside passengers, one of the riders, who overheard him, cried out, 'Please your honour and glory, sir, will you be pleased to tell us are the hounds far behind us?' At the close of my engagements in Ireland I set off for London, and in Wales met my friend, Mr. William Maddocks, who joined me, and a delightful journey we had. I arrived in Pall Mall on September 21st, and heard with real concern of the destruction of Covent Garden Theatre the night previous by fire. However, the managers opened the Opera House in six days (so that the performers suffered little or nothing) with the tragedy of *Douglas* and the musical entertainment of *Rosina*."

In August, 1810, Kelly stayed with his friends, Major and Mrs. Waring, at Southampton, from whence they made a tour of the Isle of Wight. At the Southampton Theatre, then under the management of Messrs. Kelly and Maxwell, also managers of the theatre at Portsmouth (where Crummles played), Mrs. Siddons, who was on a visit to Mrs. Fitzhugh, near by, was performing, as were also Jack Bannister and Alexander Pope (1763–1835), the tragic actor who was also a skilled miniature painter. Kelly next went on a visit to Lord Eardley at his beautiful estate of Belvedere, near Woolwich, in Kent, where was then a fine collection of paintings, including Murillo's " Assumption " and " The Marriage in Cana " of Paul Veronese. Lord Eardley was the son of Sampson Gideon, a Jewish financier of Portuguese origin who was much in the confidence of Walpole. He raised £1,700,000 for the Government in 1745, and four years later executed the consolidation of the National Debt. His son, Kelly's friend, was created a peer, but the title became extinct in 1824, for Lord Eardley left no son : his eldest daughter and co-heir married Lord Saye and Sele. His great house of Belvedere is now the Royal Alfred Institution for Aged Merchant Seamen, and will never again witness such quaint scenes as Kelly depicts in the long ago :

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[1] See *ante*, p. 154.

" I did myself the pleasure on the 21st of October, 1810, to commemorate the natal day of Lord Eardley by composing the music of an ode, for three voices, written on the occasion. It was sung by my brother, Captain Kelly, Mr. Bellamy, and myself, at Belvedere, before a large company invited on the occasion, amongst whom were all the Artillery officers from Woolwich ; their band was also in attendance. The day was passed in great hilarity, our noble host was in high spirits ; and, as the jovial glass went round, told a number of anecdotes ; among others, one that seemed to amuse his visitors very much. He said that a few days previous he was walking in the Strand, going to his bankers, Messrs. Child, near Temple Bar, in company with a friend, an officer who had served under the Duke York in Flanders. Walking along, they were followed by a middle-aged man, rather shabbily dressed, who, by his brogue, they found to be an Irishman. He kept close on the heels of the military gentlemen, crying, ' God preserve your honour, may all blessings from above be showered down upon you ; there is not a day that my wife, my children, and myself do not offer up our prayers that you may never lose the use of your legs.' 'And pray, my good friend,' said the man of war, 'what good have I and my legs ever done you to merit such unbounded gratitude?' 'Please your honour,' said the man, 'you saved my life, that's all.' 'In what way, my good fellow?' asked the officer. 'Please your honour,' said the Irishman, 'when *you* served with the Duke of York, in Flanders, *I* was a private in your regiment; and one hot morning you were so deucedly frightened that you took to your heels like a lamplighter and ran away; and I, because you were my own particular officer, ran after you, and thereby saved my life, for which, as I said before, the blessings of me and mine ever attend you."

In this same summer, 1810, of visits to the Peerage, Kelly was delighted to go to his kind friend, Lord Guilford, at Wroxton Abbey, near Banbury, whereby it will be seen that the social aspirations of actors to move in another sphere beyond the baize curtain are not altogether modern manifestations of a century later:

"Mr. and Mrs. Kemble were there on a visit, as was his lordship's sister, Lady Charlotte Lindsay[1]; indeed, the house was full of visitors, amongst whom was Sir William Gell. At that time, Lord Guilford was preparing for his annual theatricals. Foote's *Mayor of Garratt* and *The Old Maid* were to be represented. The part of the Old Maid was admirably acted by Lady Charlotte; but the favourite piece was *The Mayor of Garratt*, which was thus cast:

Major Sturgeon . . .	*The Earl of Guilford.*
Sir Jacob Jollup . . .	*Mr. Kemble.*
Jerry Sneak . . .	*The Hon. Barry St. Leger.*
Crispin Heel-tap . . .	*Sir William Gell.*
Roger	*Mr. Michael Kelly.*
Mrs. Bruin . . .	*Mrs. Kemble.*
Mrs. Sneak . . .	*Lady Charlotte Lindsay.*

"The noble Earl was an inimitable Major Sturgeon; Lady Charlotte an excellent Mrs. Sneak; the Honourable Barry St. Leger was extremely comical and effective; and the rest of the

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[1] Lady-in-Waiting to the Princess of Wales.

dramatis personæ were ably filled. But the *bonne bouche* of the whole was the Sir Jacob Jollup of John Kemble, which he acted with the greatest gravity in a full-bottomed wig. And never did he take more pains with Coriolanus at Covent Garden than he did at Wroxton Abbey with Sir Jacob Jollup. An old gentleman from Banbury, who had never seen Kemble act before, sat next him at supper ; thinking to say something civil, he complimented him very much on his performance of Sir Jacob. ‘ Sir,’ said he, ‘ it was a fine piece of acting ; but I always understood that your powers lay more in the tragic than the comic line.’ The sapient observation of this Banbury Cake having been overheard, caused more laughter than even Kemble’s performance.

“ There were two nights’ performances at Wroxton ; on the first, the theatre was open to his lordship’s tenantry, and the farmers and their daughters. After the performance there was a ball, where the servants exhibited high life below-stairs, and tripped merrily away with their masters and mistresses ; the lord had, perhaps, a kitchen-maid for his partner, the Countess a footman or a groom—a *mélange* which, it must be confessed, appeared highly agreeable to all parties ; then followed a plentiful supper, at which they enjoyed themselves the remainder of the night. The second day’s performance was for the nobility and gentry of the neighbourhood : but the first audience was always the best pleased and the loudest in applauding. The whole, however, was a scene of joy and hilarity ; and his lordship was delighted to witness the happiness which he diffused, and which was portrayed in every countenance. Lord Guilford did not confine his theatricals solely to Wroxton Abbey. He treated his numerous tenants in Kent, and the nobility and gentry within many miles of his magnificent seat at Waldershare, with similar entertainments.”[1]

On one occasion when Kelly was at Waldershare, he says there was nothing but festivity for the whole fortnight. O’Keefe’s play, *The Son-in-Law,* was performed. Lord Guilford played Old Cranky with true humour, and rendered his song with stentorian lungs ; Major Dawkins was the Bowkit ; and Kelly's friend, Joseph Maddocks, represented Arionelli and Orator Mum, the talented amateur whose performance of Sir Anthony Absolute was pronounced by Sheridan to be uniquely perfect. William Maddocks, M.P., was debarred by the gout from playing the part of Old Vinegar, but he consoled himself by writing the following song commemorating these happy days at Waldershare, while the words were set to music composed by Kelly :

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[1] This pleasant picture of life at Wroxton and Waldershare displays a happy relationship between a great family and its servants that is now almost extinct. The modern *nouveau riche* or American tenant who occupies an ancient seat is only concerned with getting good service in return for the enormous wages he has to pay : he is not interested in the individuality of his servants, their welfare, and their amusements ; the old bond of affectionate esteem and respect that bound the hall to the village (whence had come the retainers for centuries) is severed.

I wish I had, I wish I had
Some Muse as Clio fair,
My voice to raise in lasting praise
Of festive Waldershare ;
Here Comus and his jovial train
Collect from day to day,
Reluctant all to part again—
Time only flies away.

Here all the laughing Hours give birth
To something ever new,
And wisdom in the mask of mirth
Bids nonsense join the crew.
The Muses here the buskin fit,
The Graces dance the hay,
Here gives the host to all, but wit,
Eternal holiday.

Then sound the lay—then sound the lay,
Aloud full chorus bear,
Commemorate this holiday,
At festive Waldershare.
Long may the host and hostess know
The same delight they give,
And may they, free from every woe,
Long live, this life to live.

Alas ! Time flew away all too soon with the members of the festive house-party, and within seven years the jovial host was dead, his widow dying four years later. Kelly's last visit to his friends was in the early autumn of 1813, when he stayed a month at Wroxton Abbey. He says : " The day before my departure, my ever-kind patron said to me, ' My dear Mic, do not be in such a hurry to leave us ; stay here a fortnight longer ; stay a month ; or stay here for ever. When we were riding the other day near the entrance of the park, you were admiring a spot of ground there, and saying how happy you should be to spend the remainder of your days there, and so you shall, if you keep in the same mind. You have no family ; I will build you a cottage on that very spot, where you shall not have the trouble of going up and down stairs ; you shall have a garden, and a paddock for a poney, and a cow attached to it. Remember this is a serious promise ; and whenever you quit public life, I will fulfil it. We will be neighbours, Mic ; my wife shall sing with you, my chaplain shall drink with you, and I will talk to you.' This liberal offer, and the kind-hearted manner in which it was made, deeply affected me. But death deprived me of my patron and my friend. He went to Italy, where he died on the 28th of January, 1817, in the fifty-fifth year of his age, esteemed and regretted by all who had the happiness of being acquainted with the qualities of his head and heart.[1] His amiable Countess did not long survive his loss."

There must have been something singularly attractive about Kelly's personality that won him the affectionate friendship and esteem of persons in the higher stations of life in those days when class distinctions were very sharply divided.

At this date, 1810, Kelly was frequently at the jocund entertainments given at Peterborough House, Parson's Green, then a rural district on the outskirts of London, by Major John Scott-Waring (1747–1819), who had been the political agent of Warren Hastings and an officer in the forces of the East India Company. He was three times married, his second wife, Elizabeth Blackrie, of Bromley, Kent, brought him £20,000, and his daughter by her became the mother of Charles Reade, the novelist. The third Mrs. Scott-Waring had been Mrs. Esten, the actress on whom the Duke of Hamilton had showered much money, and a lady of somewhat easy virtue, for it was written on her marriage to Scott-Waring, "Though well known for ages past, she's not the worse for Waring." Of the entertainments given by her and her husband at Peterborough House, Kelly relates:

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[1] George Colman the younger also paid a warm tribute to the engaging qualities of the fourth Lord Guilford, recalling " his convivial wit, his flow of humour, his honourable principles, and his open generosity of heart." Lord Guilford married in 1810 Maria, daughter of Thomas Boycott, of Rudgehall, Co. Salop. She died December 30th, 1821, without issue. Wroxton Abbey is now in the possession of Lord North, grandson of the third Earl of Guilford and grand-nephew of the fourth Earl (Kelly's particular friend). The barony of North of Kirtling became separated from the earldom of Guilford after the death of the third Earl in 1802, when the title fell into abeyance between his three daughters for thirty-nine years.

"The society consisted chiefly of persons of genius. There have I met, month after month, Lady Hamilton, Mrs. Billington, the Abbé Campbell; the Irish Master of the Rolls, Mr. Curran; and a worthy countryman of mine, Mr. John Glynn, of the Commissariat Department; and many a time and oft have we heard the chimes of midnight, for that was the hour at which Curran's lamp burned brightest; and round the social board, till morning peeped, all was revelry and mirth."

Concerning Lady Hamilton, Kelly has preserved an entertaining glimpse of her extreme "sensibility" in any matter that appertained to her hero and her keen grasp of an opportunity for "publicity," as it would be termed to-day. The occasion was the production of a play called *The Royal Oak* at the Haymarket Theatre, in June, 1811. Kelly had composed the music and R. W. Elliston enacted Charles II. The former writes:

"Connected with my recollections of this play is an anecdote relative to my deceased friend, Lady Hamilton, so characteristic of that talented but unfortunate woman, and at the same time so demonstrative of her warmth of feeling, that I cannot suffer it to pass unrecorded. I had composed a plaintive ballad in the second act for a Miss Wheatley (formerly a pupil of Attwood's), who possessed a fine deep contralto voice—the poetry was descriptive of a warrior who had fallen in recent battle. Upon the fifth representation of the new play, Lady Hamilton, with a party of friends, occupied one of the stage-boxes, appearing all gaiety and animation. Scarcely, however, had this ballad commenced when she became tremulous and agitated; and at its conclusion, upon the encore being loudly demanded, she exclaimed, 'For God's sake, remove me—I cannot bear it.' Her terrified friends withdrew her from the box, whence she was immediately conveyed home in a fainting condition.

"The following morning, Miss Wheatley received a note from her ladyship (to whom she had previously been unknown), inviting her to her house, where, after complimenting her upon the force and feeling with which she had given the melody, she added, 'The description brought our glorious Nelson with such terrible truth before my mind's eye, that you overwhelmed me at the moment, but now I feel as if I could listen to you in that air for ever.' She prevailed upon her visitor to repeat the ballad no less than four times at the pianoforte, 'as if increase of appetite grew by what it fed upon.' Eventually, so powerful became this sentiment that she induced Miss Wheatley to retire from the stage altogether, and accept under her roof the post of musical governess to the young Horatia Nelson, who had been confided to her ladyship's guardianship.[1] Not a day afterwards elapsed but the favourite song was put in requisition. I published it under the title of 'Rest, warrior, rest.' It was generally esteemed one of my happiest efforts; and at the present day is perpetually performed at concerts and music-meetings by that delightful singer, the charming Miss M. Tree,[2] who has given it a renewed fashion and zest."

In February, 1811, *Blue Beard* was revived at Covent Garden, and Kelly superintended the music. On arriving at the theatre on the first morning of rehearsal he perceived a number of horses at the back of the stage, the steeds being destined for the spectacle of *Blue Beard*. Meeting Kemble, Kelly, pointing to the place where the horses stood, said, "Now are we in Arden." To which Kemble replied, "More fools we." They bowed to each other, *à la mode de* Noodle and Doodle in *Tom Thumb*, and passed on. In the previous November, Kelly had composed the whole of the music for *Gustavus Vasa, The Deliverer of His Country—Sweden*, adapted by Dimond from the play of that name by Henry Brooke.

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[1] Horatia, Nelson's daughter by Lady Hamilton, was born on January 29th, 1801, so she was about ten years old at this date of the arrival of Miss Wheatley, in succession to Cecilia Connor. Horatia married in 1822 the Rev. Philip Ward, of Tenterden, and died in 1881.

[2] Ann Maria Tree (1801–1862) also made successful appearances in Shaksperean parts such as Ariel and Viola.

CHAPTER VIII

The Last Years

In the summer of the year 1811, Kelly proceeded to Ireland to fulfil his final professional engagement, when, in company with Signora Bertinotti, Madame Naldi, and Cavini, he sang in *Il Furbo* and Mozart's *Così fan tutte*. And so it came about that Kelly made his last appearance on any stage on September 5th, 1811, on the very same stage of the Dublin Theatre where he had made his first appearance as a boy in 1779, thirty-two years before. Bartlett Cooke accompanied him on the oboe during both occasions. It was appropriate that the green curtain fell finally for Kelly on those boards where it had risen so auspiciously for the boy of sixteen when his golden future lay bright before him, stretching to the joys of Italy, the triumphs of Vienna, and the more solid fame of Drury Lane.

Though he had achieved all possible success in his career as singer and composer, Kelly had by no means gathered up the material golden shekels, for, like so many of his profession, he had been over-generous and hospitable, and the " composing of wines " had been an expensive business, added to his inability to manage his actual business of selling music at his Saloon adjoining the Opera House in Pall Mall. As he truly moralised : " To be a professional man and a trader at the same time is, I believe, impossible ; but this I found out too late ; for if a man be fond of his profession, it must, and ought to, engross all his time and thoughts ; and, therefore, he is constantly liable to be cheated by his subordinates. To a man occupied in the services of the public, his mind fully occupied with the honourable ambition of standing well in their opinion, it is perfectly immaterial at the time whether meat be fourpence or a shilling a pound, and so on in all other things ; and from want of looking into his affairs, which prudence not nearly allied to genius requires him to do, he gets involved, and sinks deeper and deeper until he is gone past recovery, while those about him are revelling in and fattening upon his credulity and inattention. Locke says, in his *Conduct of the Human Understanding*, that ' let a man be much engaged in the contemplation of any one sort of knowledge, and that alone becomes everything to him': from experience, in my own humble way, I found the philosopher's remark too true."

These sage observations were generated by the unfortunate fact that on the very day of his farewell performance in Dublin, September 5th, 1811, Michael Kelly was gazetted a bankrupt owing, it would seem, to his own carelessness, and confidence in an unworthy friend, rather than to any culpable financial malfeasance of his own. He read the startling news at the inn at Shrewsbury, on his journey from Holyhead to London, when he took up a paper while his supper was preparing. To his horror he saw in the gazette the unexpected words—"Bankrupt: Michael Kelly, of Pall Mall, music-seller." The circumstances were involved, and he says:

"I instantly wrote to my principal man of business, who had the management of all my money transactions (his name I shall not mention for the sake of his family, part of which I know to be respectable) to know by whom the docket was struck. Unfortunately for me I had reposed the greatest confidence in him, and would have trusted my life as well as my property in his hands. He was recommended to me by a particular friend, and came into my employ a poor man, but he left it amply stocked with everything, and *sans cérémonie* took himself abroad. I heard nothing more of him until I was told that, from the badness of the climate to which he went, he was seized with illness and there died. When I got to town I found the docket had been struck against me by a particular friend of his on account of a dishonoured bill. It was certainly a planned thing. My solicitor looking into my affairs, which I unluckily did not, found I was plunged by my *fidus Achates* deeper in the mire than I could possibly have imagined and therefore advised me, though my property might have paid all demands three times over and though I might have suspended the commission, to let the bankruptcy take its course, and so I did, and all the property in my Saloon was disposed of for one tenth of its value."

It would seem that Kelly never obtained his discharge, for after his death, fifteen years later, his estate was described officially as "insolvent." But he was by no means in financial want, for in addition to his earnings as a composer and musical director he had a small annuity from the management of Drury Lane Theatre,[1] and, according to Cyrus Redding, a pension of £100 a year from the privy purse of his adored sovereign, King George IV, during his last days. As previously related, Kelly about 1812 removed to an excellent house, No. 13 Great Russel (as it was generally spelt at that time) Street, and the agonies of the gout could not stop him from being present in Covent Garden Theatre on June 29th in that year when his long-time friend, Sarah Siddons, the brightest luminary of the Stage, made her farewell appearance at the age of fifty-seven. He says, " I was determined to see her, and got into the orchestra. The play was *Macbeth* ; she acted Lady Macbeth divinely, and looked as beautiful as ever. The house was crowded to excess. After her sleeping scene was concluded, the audience unanimously called for the curtain to drop, and would not allow the play to finish—a marked and just compliment to the most splendid actress the British Stage ever possessed, and whose private character has little less contributed to the exaltation of the profession which she adorned than the unrivalled greatness of her public talents."

Despite her fame, Mrs. Siddons was never highly paid in comparison with the rate of present-day salaries. Even at the end of her theatrical career, she only received £630 for twelve performances at £52 10*s*. per night : whereas W. H. W. Betty, The Young Roscius, as a boy of thirteen, in 1804, received nearly £100 a night for twenty-eight performances at Drury Lane, and a further £2,540 for his two benefits. Curiously enough, Kelly does not mention Master Betty in his *Reminiscences*.

In the summer of 1813, though very ill with gout, Kelly was asked to go to Dublin in connection with a law-suit against a music-seller named Hime, who had pirated and published a number of his compositions. Accompanied by Mr. Addison and Mrs. Crouch's sister, Mrs. Horrebow, and her son Harry, now a boy of fourteen, he set forth in a travelling-carriage, and proceeded by short stages and slowly to Holyhead, where he put up at the *Stanley Arms*, kept by Mr. Spenser. Here Kelly

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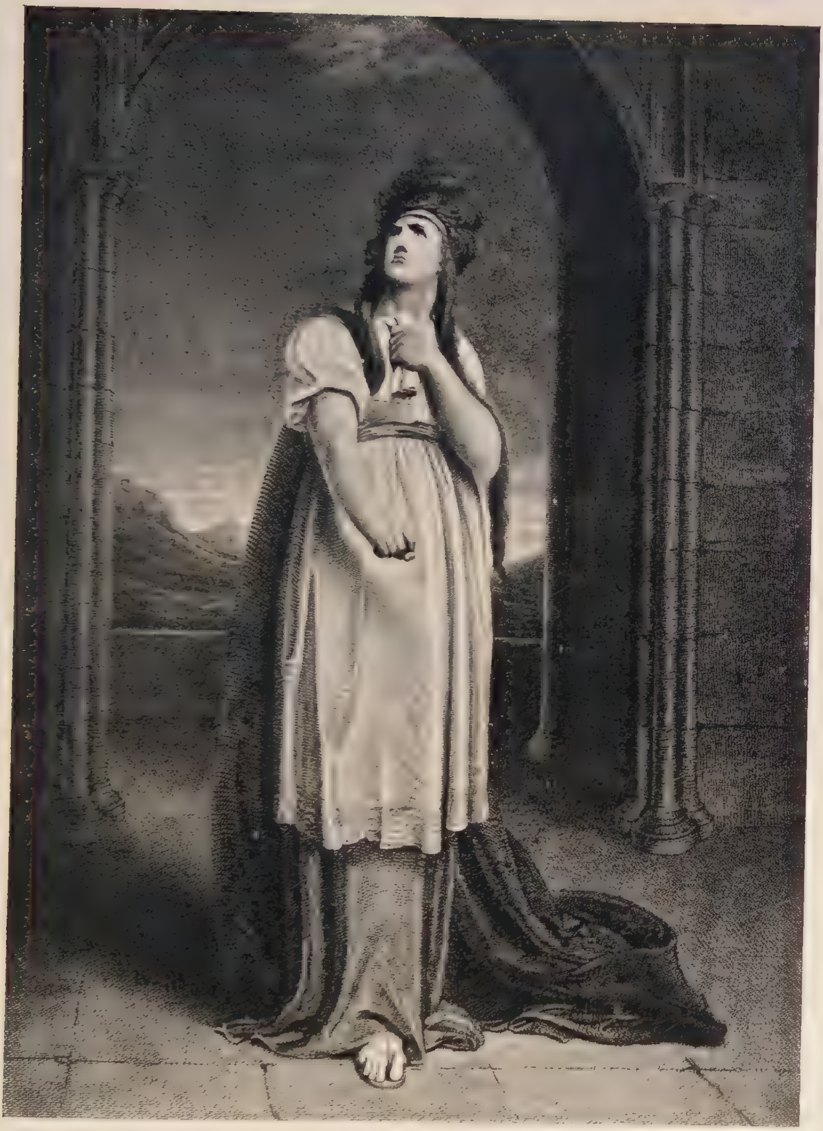
[1] See *ante*, p. 306.



MRS. SIDDONS AS LADY MACBETH

From the portrait by R. Westall

had to remain for nine weeks, as his doctor pronounced the rest of the journey would only be possible at the risk of his life. Kelly mentions a curious local character, who called upon him every day:

"In his person he verified the old adage, that every eye forms its own beauty. This said droll little fellow, surnamed by the inhabitants of Holyhead 'Billy-in-the-bowl,' though a dwarf, having lost both his legs, or, rather, never having had any, went crawling about, literally seated in a bowl-dish; yet, in spite of his deformities, he captivated the heart of a beautiful Welsh girl, who would fain have him for better or worse. Her father, a wealthy farmer, offered to give her a good fortune, and a young and handsome man for her husband: but, no! she would have 'Billy-in-the-bowl.' She bore him two fine boys, and is, I am told, even now, very jealous of him."

On August 25th, being better in health, though not well enough to undertake the sea passage to Ireland, Kelly set forth from Holyhead to visit Lord Guilford at Wroxton Abbey, and experienced an adventure on the sands of Bangor something akin to that of Darsie Latimer at Solway Firth:

"We crossed Bangor Ferry, and I sent Harry Horrebow on to Jackson's to get horses; those which brought us from Gwyndu we left on the other side of the ferry. I was yet on the beach alone, in the carriage, unable to move, owing to my gout. The tide was coming in rapidly; no appearance of a human being to extricate me from what, I thought, a perilous situation; for every moment I expected the carriage would be afloat, and carried down the stream. At length, by the arrival of horses, I was relieved from my apprehensions, and proceeded on my way to Aber, about eight miles from Bangor, where I dined and slept at the *Bull*, a charming Welsh inn."

The next morning he crossed Conway Ferry, and, with lovely scenery around and a Neapolitan sky overhead, he passed Conway Castle, the scene of "Monk" Lewis's *Castle Spectre*, and where, in the drama, was sung Kelly's song of "Megen-oh! Oh! Megen-ee." Then, he says, "it gave me great delight to recall the melody, nor could I resist singing it all through; while the boatmen and other passengers, who of course did not participate in the feelings by which I was actuated, seemed much astonished, and, by their silence, not ill-pleased at the animated manner in which I was singing."

"*Sleep you, or wake you, lady bright?*
Sing Megen-oh! Oh! Megen-ee.
Now is the fittest time for flight:
Sing Megen-oh! Oh! Megen-ee.
Know, from your tyrant father's power
Beneath the window of your tower
A boat now waits to set you free.
Sing Megen-oh! Oh! Megen-ee."

It was certainly a remarkable experience for the boatmen and the passengers as they crossed the ferry to hear the aforetime operatic star of the Court of Vienna, the favoured of Mozart, the leading singer and composer of Drury Lane, carolling, despite the agonies of gout, one of his own most popular songs. Then he was recognised by a more distant auditor:

"In getting near the shore, I observed a picturesque castle, about half a mile from the place at which we were to land; I inquired from one of the boatmen to whom it belonged; and at that moment, a pleasure-boat being alongside of the ferry-boat, a gentleman who was in it jumped up and, addressing me, said, 'That castle belongs to Lord Kirkwall,[1] who is expected there to-morrow; and I am sure his lordship will be most happy to see Mr. Kelly as long as he may make it convenient to remain with him. In the meantime, Mr. Kelly, if you will do me the favour to come into my boat, and join our fishing-party, I shall be happy to give you a bed at my house, and a hearty welcome, and in the morning will accompany you to Lord Kirkwall's.' I returned the gentleman my acknowledgments for his politeness, but excused myself, as I was in a great hurry to continue my journey. On inquiring of the boatmen who the gentleman was, they told me it was Colonel Lloyd, who had a beautiful house near the ferry."

So, leaving the ultra-hospitable Colonel, Kelly passed on to

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[1] Viscount Kirkwall (1778–1820) was the eldest son of Mary Countess of Orkney in her own right by the Honourable Thomas Fitzmaurice, of Llewenny Hall, Denbighshire, brother of the first Marquis of Lansdowne.

Wroxton Abbey, and, after his pleasant visit there,[1] returned to London in October.

Kelly was a freemason, and on December 1st, 1813, he took part in a great function at Freemasons' Hall, when the Duke of Kent was installed as Grand Master of Masons. Various pieces of music were performed by the Duke's military band, the members of which were all masons, together with songs by eminent singers. Kelly composed music for the occasion, including a song, rendered by Brother Bellamy " with great animation " to the sound of " unanimous applause " :

Mountains may fall, and rocks decay,
And isle on isle be swept away,
But Masonry's primeval truth,
Unbroke by force, unchanged by time,
Shall bloom in renovated youth,
And energy sublime.

Apparently there were great rejoicings because the Duke of Kent was joined in masonic brotherhood by his fleshly brother, the Duke of Sussex, " for the following duet met with the same meed of approbation."

For see ! from Heaven the peaceful dove,
With olive branch descend ;
Augustus shall with Edward join,
All rivalry to end ;
And taught by their fraternal love,
Our arms, our hearts shall intertwine,
The union to approve.

Then Edward and Augustus hail !
For now beneath the Brunswick line,
One system shall prevail ;
O'er all the earth, with truths divine,
Shall Masonry extend its sway,
Till time itself shall pass away
In unity to shine.

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[1] See *ante*, p. 367.

FULL CHORUS
Then, brothers, hail the kind decree
That gave them both to—Masonry.

In the summer of 1814, Kelly again gave impromptu songs alfresco. He had gone to France with Harry Horrebow, Mr. Nield, a solicitor, James Heath (1757–1834), the celebrated engraver, and Jack Bannister, the actor. Kelly's account of France during the interregnum of peace while Napoleon was at Elba is of interest:

"None of the party with the exception of myself could speak French. However, we had a delightful journey. We stopped a day and a half at Calais, where I hired an excellent roomy post-coach with three horses, and made an agreement that we should be set down on the fourth day at Paris, or be on the road eight days, at our option; the latter seemed most agreeable to my party, as they wished to see everything worth looking at on the road, and none of us were pressed for time. Our coachman, with whom I made the agreement, was very communicative. One part of the road between Calais and Boulogne was rather bad. Our coachman was walking by the side of the coach, and I was singing the romance in *Richard Cœur de Lion*. 'Bravo! bravo!' exclaimed coachee, '*sur mon honneur, vous chantez très-bien*, and sing as if you knew music too.' '*Allons, donc, ventre bleu*—let you and I sing a duet.' 'With all my soul,' said I. He asked me if I knew the duet in the opera of *Nina*. I told him I did. '*Allons, donc, commencez*,' said he, and to it we went pell-mell; he had a strong bass voice, and sang perfectly in tune. After the duet he sang the song of 'O! Richard! O! mon Roi' and the chanson 'Je suis Lindor,' with excellent expression and much to our astonishment.

"We arrived at Boulogne-sur-mer, and alighted at Mrs. Parker's Hotel, where we had an excellent dinner and good beds, and set off early the next morning for Montreuil. We here lost our chaunting guide, which I at first regretted; his successor was quite a young man, very good-natured, and of engaging manners; so much so that we christened him Le Fevre. While we were at breakfast I expressed my surprise to Le Fevre at hearing the coachman who drove us from Calais to Boulogne sing so well.

'Sir,' said he, 'that gentleman is considered amongst us a perfect good musician. A few years back he was a captain in the army, but very dissipated and wild, in short, there was no end to his extravagance. His father left him a pretty patrimony, which he soon got rid of; and for reasons with which I am not acquainted he was obliged to give up his commission and leave the army, and now gains his living by driving a coach between Calais and Boulogne; but let him only have his music, his brandy, and his pipe, he will sing, drink, and smoke, day and night, and seems the happiest man in all France.'

"At that time, recent as is the date of the occurrence, reverses like these were not so common in England as they are now; at present, extravagance in time of war and half-pay in time of peace have driven men to drive coaches, who had every just expectation at one time of keeping them; but, 'all the world's a stage,' and it is not at all anomalous to find some obliged to take up with the commonest fare; nor is any employment for the support of a family to be considered dishonourable which is not dishonest.

"At Montreuil we went to the hotel kept by the two Brothers with enormous Cocked Hats; the eldest, near ninety years of age, in full possession of all his faculties, was as garrulous as need be. He seemed very proud of having known Sterne, with whom he told us he had conversed, and whom he remembered perfectly. I would advise those who are fond of good living and particularly of woodcock-pies to dine at Montreuil, the younger Cocked Hat is esteemed a perfect *cordon bleu* in cookery. We slept at Abbeville at the Hôtel d'Europe, an excellent house. We took luncheon at Beauvais, where it was market day, and the street in which our inn was situated was crowded with market people listening to a French ballad singer roaring away on the steps of the coffee-house opposite to our inn. I was in high spirits, and determined to rival the said Stentorian ballad-singer; so I mounted the steps and sang a strophe of a French song. The crowd gave me great applause and loud cheering, so much indeed that the mistress of the coffee-house declared that if I would remain at Beauvais and sing to the frequenters of her coffee-room she would board and lodge me free of expense. After loitering on the road for six days, on the seventh (Sunday) we arrived at Paris, where lodgings had been taken for us by the elder Vestris close to the Boulevard du Temple, which were very comfortable. We passed a delightful time while we remained in Paris.

"We went one evening to the Théâtre Vaudeville and saw the first performance of *La Route à Paris*. Joly, the favourite actor, played several characters in different disguises. His personification of an English gouty lord was perfect. Bannister thought him excellent. Madame Belmont, the original Fanchon, belonged to this theatre, and is an excellent actress and a fine woman. We also witnessed the first representation of *The Two Boxers* at the Théâtre des Variétés, performed by those two excellent comic actors, Brunet and Potier. In the line of simple characters there are no actors like them; they are real comedians without buffoonery or grimace.

"We accompanied Mr. Heath on a visit to the late Monsieur Denon,[1] the once favourite of Buonaparte. He resided in a fine house upon the Quai Voltaire, furnished in a style of the greatest magnificence. His pictures, prints, cameos, intaglios, statues, etc., were of the first description. Indeed, when accompanying Buonaparte in Egypt, Italy, etc., he had the picking and chusing of the best; and, to do him justice, he did not appear to have forgotten number one. He received us with the greatest politeness, inquired most affectionately after Mr. Heath's son,[2] with whom he was very well acquainted, and spoke with the most unqualified praise of his talents as an artist and the amiability of his character as a private individual. Denon's countenance was replete with intelligence and genius. I introduced Bannister to him as one of our first-rate actors; he said of that he had no doubt, as Mr. Bannister had a fine stage face and the eye of a good comedian. He gave us recommendations for the purpose of viewing all the public institutes, colleges, mint, etc., in Paris, which were of great service to us as they gave us an *entrée* to all those places. We were daily visitors at the Louvre, and were of course highly delighted with the works there. Mr. Glover[1] the English artist, had permission to copy some picture, and was every day to be seen at work in the gallery. I met there one morning my countryman, of whom I have spoken, Mr. Curran. I asked his opinion of Paris; he replied that he thought it a mixture of dirt and magnificence, that some of their buildings were very superb, but when once seen that was sufficient for him; for his own part he had not the smallest wish to *encore* a building.

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[1] Dominique Vivant Denon (1747–1825), created a baron by Napoleon, commenced his career as a diplomatist, but throughout his life was devoted to art. He was employed by Louis XV to make a collection of gems for Madame Pompadour, and worked a good deal at etching and design. He was many years in Italy, but returned to France during the Revolution, despite the danger, for his name was on the list of *émigrés*. However, by the aid of David, he procured an engagement to design a set of Republican costumes at the time of the worst horrors of the Revolution. With the rise of Napoleon, Denon became one of his fervent admirers, and, at the General's request, accompanied Napoleon throughout the expedition into Egypt. Denon made drawings of all the interesting monuments he saw in 1798, and in 1802 published his great work, *Voyage dans la Basse et la Haute Egypt, pendant les Campagnes du Général Bonaparte.* Following this work, Denon was appointed by Napoleon Directeur-Général des Musées, a post he lost at the Bourbon Restoration. Denon then occupied himself with his *Monumens des Arts du Dessin*, which appeared posthumously in 1829. Denon designed the Napoleonic medals.

[2] Charles Heath (1785–1848) was a natural son of James Heath. He was a very popular engraver, and some thirteen years after this date was actively associated with the annuals, the best example being *The Keepsake* for 1828, which was produced by Heath and William Harrison Ainsworth, then a publisher in Old Bond Street.

"My friend, Madame Grassini, was living in the Rue d'Anjou. I dined with her, in company with the celebrated composer Paer,[2] an excellent and jolly fellow. I have seen him take his bottle of champagne, and two of burgundy; then, after coffee, two or three glasses of brandy, by way of *chassé*, quit the table as sober as a judge, and sit down to the pianoforte, on which instrument he excelled; he also sang with infinite grace and expression. In the evening, Madame Grassini had a musical party, at which I was introduced to Mr. and Mrs. Crawford, who, extraordinary to say, had, during the whole period of the Revolution, remained at their house in the Rue d'Anjou unmolested by any of the different ruling powers.

"My party were very much struck with the water-works of Marly, the magnificence of Versailles, the Petit Trianon,

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[1] John Glover (1767–1849), landscape painter, President of the Society of Painters in Water-Colour, 1815, and one of the founders of the Society of British Artists, with whom he exhibited, 1824–30. He was much in France, Switzerland, and Italy, and finally emigrated to Australia in 1831. He died in Tasmania.

[2] Ferdinando Paer (1774–1839), a native of Parma, was at Vienna in 1795, where he produced several operas. He was at Dresden in 1801, and there brought out his *Leonora* and *I Fuorusciti*. After the battle of Jena, he was introduced to Napoleon, whom he attended to Warsaw and Paris, where he was appointed composer and conductor of the chamber music of the Empress Marie-Louise. Paer did not lose favour at the Restoration of the Bourbons, by whom, in 1818, he was appointed Director of the Opéra Italien. Paer's operas *Agnèse*, *Griselda*, *Achille*, and *Sargino* "give him a title to be ranked among the first masters of the age."

Malmaison, and St. Cloud; the latter was my favourite. We were shewn everything worth seeing, and, amongst other curiosities, the chair in which Buonaparte used to sit when he held a council. The person who explained everything to us made us examine the number of notches made in it by Buonaparte, who, while giving audience, or transacting business, had a habit of holding a penknife in his hand, and was continually making cuts in the chair—more or less as he felt pleased or otherwise. It was said, that, when in the council-chamber, he would never sit in any other chair. Our cicerone informed us that he was seated in it when he gave an audience to the Russian Ambassador; and on giving him a paper, said, 'Read, sign, and be off.' That was said to be the only conversation which passed between them; and from the tyrant's genuine character, it seems very probably to have been so. The Ambassador made no reply, and retired.

"The day after our return from St. Cloud, we went to the Fair of Vincennes, which was crowded with booths, mountebanks, puppet-shows, etc. From this merry scene we turned to the mournful task of viewing the castle of Vincennes; and the spot where the ill-fated Duc D'Enghien was, by the sanguinary orders of Buonaparte, barbarously murdered.

"I was one evening in company, at Madame Grassini's, with a Parisian lady who had just returned from London, where she had been passing the winter. I asked her how she liked that city? 'To say the truth,' she replied, 'I like two things in London passing well; *par exemple*—the pavement of your streets and the mock-turtle of your kitchens: in every other thing, Paris is far preferable! I stopped some days longer in England than I at first intended out of curiosity to see the sun; but the whole time I was there he never was complaisant enough to make his appearance.' And yet I was informed this lady was a person of some consideration in Paris, and reckoned mighty clever.

"Bannister and Heath were obliged to return to England—the former to fulfil his engagements, and the latter upon business. The last day they remained in Paris we devoted to see Montmartre, from the summit of which the view of Paris is very magnificent. My friends took their departure for Rouen, on their way to Dieppe. I had some business to detain me in Paris a week longer, and then purposed following them; but on the eve of my leaving Paris, I was seized with the gout, and kept my bed for ten days. When I was able to move I hired a cabriolet, and, with Henry Horrebow, set off post for Rouen. The first day I was in such pain I could not get farther than Pontoise, a town famous for the excellence of its veal. The next day I reached Rouen, and put up at the Hôtel de France, an excellent house. The peasants of Normandy seemed to enjoy themselves ; for in every village, through which I passed, they were either dancing or playing at various games. I got to a late dinner at Dieppe, and truly glad I was, as my gout was increasing. My hotel on the quay was lively enough ; I saw everything passing, and remained there five days, waiting for a fair wind for Brighton, and, what was rather strange to meet with in France, I got some of the finest old port wine I ever tasted."

So as ever, and to the end, Kelly was a *bon-viveur*, and, despite his physical sufferings, he could still appreciate, and recall long after, the fine veal and old port he had partaken of during the tedious and prolonged journey from France to Brighton in 1814, and when, in view of his illness, port could hardly have been the most beneficial of beverages. He continues:

" There were three professors of music from London, of the name of Harris, waiting at Dieppe, as well as myself, for a fair wind, who did me the favour every evening to come and sit with me, and were very agreeable company. On the fifth evening, the wind being fair, the *Neptune* packet was to sail for Brighton. Though unable to move hand or foot, I was determined to go in it ; and was carried, in great torture, by four seamen on board, and packed into my berth. If to have a seventeen hours' rough passage, a violent sea-sickness, with a twinging fit of the gout at the same time, be not enough to put a poor fellow's patience to the proof, I know not what it is. I sent Henry with the passengers on shore in the first boat to procure a carriage, as I could not walk ; and remained on board the packet until he returned with a sedan-chair for me on the beach ; and, luckily, Mr. Addison, who was walking on the beach, at the time, ran to the *Old Ship*, and secured me accommodation there. I got better every hour ; and the kind attention paid me by Mr. Shugard, the landlord, Mrs. Shugard, and all their family, I shall always be happy to acknowledge."

While at Brighton, Kelly went to the theatre to see *Bombastes Furioso*, in which piece was acting J. P. Harley (1786–1858), a young actor then a member of Trotter's provincial company. He introduced a song of his own, set to a famous air of Braham's, and his singing and acting so pleased Kelly that he wrote the next day to Arnold, manager of the English Opera House (the Lyceum), strongly advising him to engage Harley without delay. By return of post came a letter enclosing proposals for a contract, which Harley at once accepted. He made his first appearance at the English Opera House, in July, 1815, as Marcelli in the opera of *The Devil's Bridge*. He remained at that theatre for twenty years, and returned there again 1841–8. Harley excelled as the exponent of Shaksperean clowns and other buffoons. In the production of *The Vampire, or the Lord of the Isles*, at the English Opera House, in 1820, his impersonation of McSwill, a bibulous henchman, seems to have swamped the horrors of the dark deeds of the Vampire, played by T. P. Cooke, for a contemporary notice speaks of " this amusing and interesting drama." It remained a memory of pleasure to Kelly that his early opinion of Harley's talents was justified, and that he was instrumental in bringing him to London.

Kelly returned to town to superintend the music for Kean's appearance in *Macbeth* at Drury Lane.[1] On October 6th, 1814, he went to Covent Garden to see his countrywoman, Miss O'Neill, make her successful début in London. Kelly was still composing; he provided the operatic music for *The Unknown Guest* in 1815; *The Fall of Taranto* in 1817; *The Bride of Abydos* in 1818; *Abudah* in 1819; and *The Lady and the Devil* for Drury Lane in May, 1820—which completed his long series of operas and musical pieces, no less than sixty-one in the space of twenty-four years since 1797, which exceeded the record of any British composer, Henry Bishop excepted.

He was now fifty-eight, and for the remaining six years of his life Michael Kelly's movements and activities were much restricted by the gout, which, as he says, " almost deprived me of loco-motion. Both my parents were sufferers from the same disorder : in me, therefore, it is constitutional, and not my age's penance for my youth's excess—for in that season I may say

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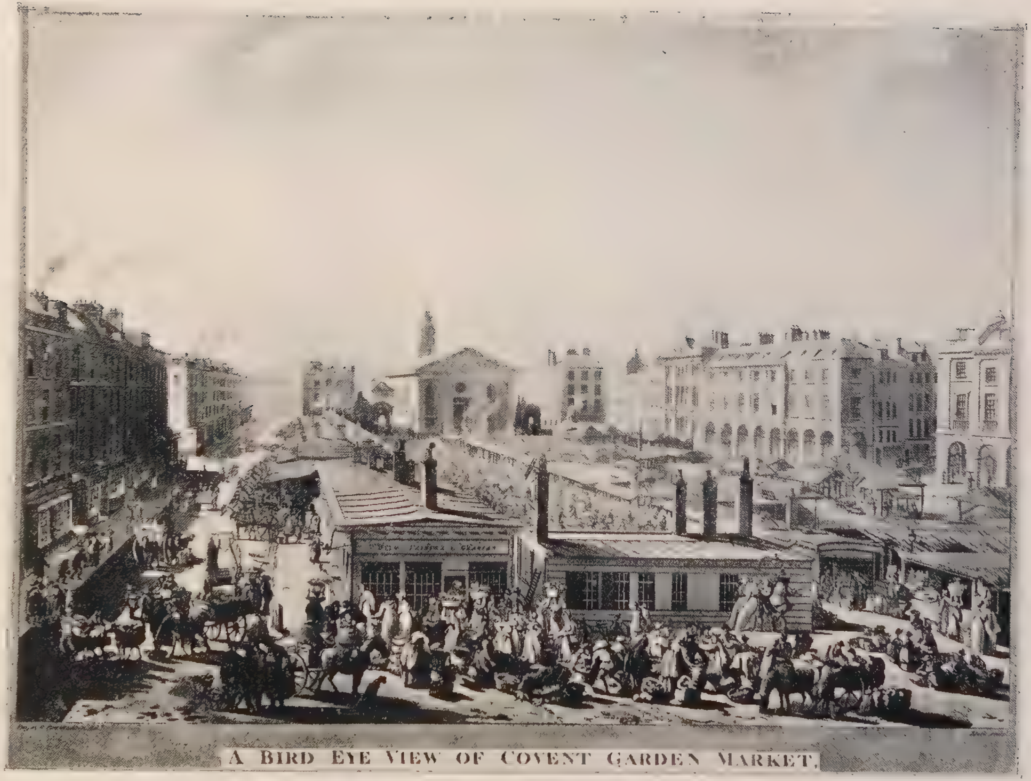
[1] See *ante*, p. 316.


A BIRD EYE VIEW OF COVENT GARDEN MARKET.

ST. PAUL'S CHURCH AND TAVISTOCK ROW, KELLY'S LAST HOME (ON THE LEFT)

From the picture by Rowlandson and Pugin, 1812 with Old Adam, in *As You Like It*, ' I never did apply hot and rebellious liquors to my blood.' 'Tis an ancient adage that the gout grants to its possessor a long lease of life : if it be so, I am sure the lease is held at a *rack-rent*. Upon the whole, however, although *non sum qualis eram*, I may yet say that my general health is good, and my spirits never better—shall I then complain of my lot ? Forbid it, Heaven. In spite of all the inflictions of my hereditary scourge, I bow my head submissively, and acknowledge, with an humble yet cheerful thankfulness, that the hand of Providence hath touched me tenderly."

It must be confessed that Kelly was ingenuously unveracious in attributing all his gouty pangs to heredity, for of a surety the countless gallons of wine he had " composed " during fifty years, added to vast quantities of rich food, had added their full quota to the final painful account. And he was wrong in thinking that his malady might permit him a long lease of life. Still, as he said, he preserved his good spirits and enjoyed life, though inevitably shadows of regret for youth and artistic triumphs and dear friends long dead thronged around him more and more as his own years drew to an end. His last home was No. 6, Tavistock Row, a pleasant house in a lively situation, for it abutted right on to the southern side of Covent Garden Market.[1] Here he gave little dinner-parties to his friends, when the cooking and wines were superlative and the host in his most admirable reminiscent mood, responsive to the Falernian hour. The guests were carefully chosen for their assimilative qualities. Thus for an evening of broad jest, Theodore Hook, with Jack Bannister, Daniel Terry, F. H. Yates—all three actors—and George Robins, the witty and voluble auctioneer, were the company. Or, if the occasion was to be musical, the guests would, for example, be T. J. Dibdin, Naldi, Morelli, and Madame Bolla.

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[1] Tavistock Row stood between Covent Garden Market and the present Tavistock Street, and was on the same line of frontage as Henrietta Street, from which it was divided by Southampton Street. There were fourteen houses in Tavistock Row, and it was at No. 4 that Charles Macklin lived, the same house that was earlier the residence of Martha Ray, who was murdered in the Piazza of Covent Garden in 1779 by Parson Hackman—

A clergyman, O wicked one,
In Covent Garden shot her :
No time to cry upon her God ;
It's hoped He's not forgot her.

Tavistock Row was demolished by 1890.

Kelly's establishment was excellently run by his housekeeper, Mrs. Walters, who had a little daughter named Julia. The child was Kelly's god-daughter: possibly she was his actual daughter, for such property as he possessed was bequeathed to Mary Walters (the administratrix of the will) and her daughter. Further, the girl early displayed evidence of marked musical ability, for at the age of five years she performed the part of the child in the opera of *L'Agnèse*, under the name of Signora Julia, "with grace and intelligence far beyond her years." She was permitted to make this very juvenile début by the advice of Ambrogetti. Kelly was so fond of the child that he took her with him even into the sacrosanct presence of his adored sovereign, George IV. The Signora Julia was anxious to see the King, and her wish was granted at Brighton, "when she beheld him in the midst of his Court, surrounded by all that was brilliant in the land, and in a palace whose splendour, when illuminated, rivalled the magnificence described in *The Arabian Nights*." The occasion was January 1st, 1822, soon after the King had at long last completed the decoration of his ornate Chinese Pavilion, and Kelly's account vividly conjures up a vanished Society:

"On that evening, the King gave a splendid party at the Pavilion, and His Majesty was graciously pleased to command my attendance to hear a concert performed by his own fine band. His Majesty did me the honour to seat himself beside me, and ask me how I liked the music which I had that day heard in the chapel, amongst which, to my surprise, had been introduced the Chacoone of Jomelli, performed in *The Castle Spectre*,[1] but which since has been called the Sanctus of Jomelli, and is now used in all the cathedrals and churches in England and the Continent under that title. His Majesty was all kindness and condescension in his manner towards me; but his kindness and condescension did not stop there. I had told my worthy friend, Kramer, the excellent master and leader of His Majesty's private band,[2] the earnest desire of little Julia, and prevailed

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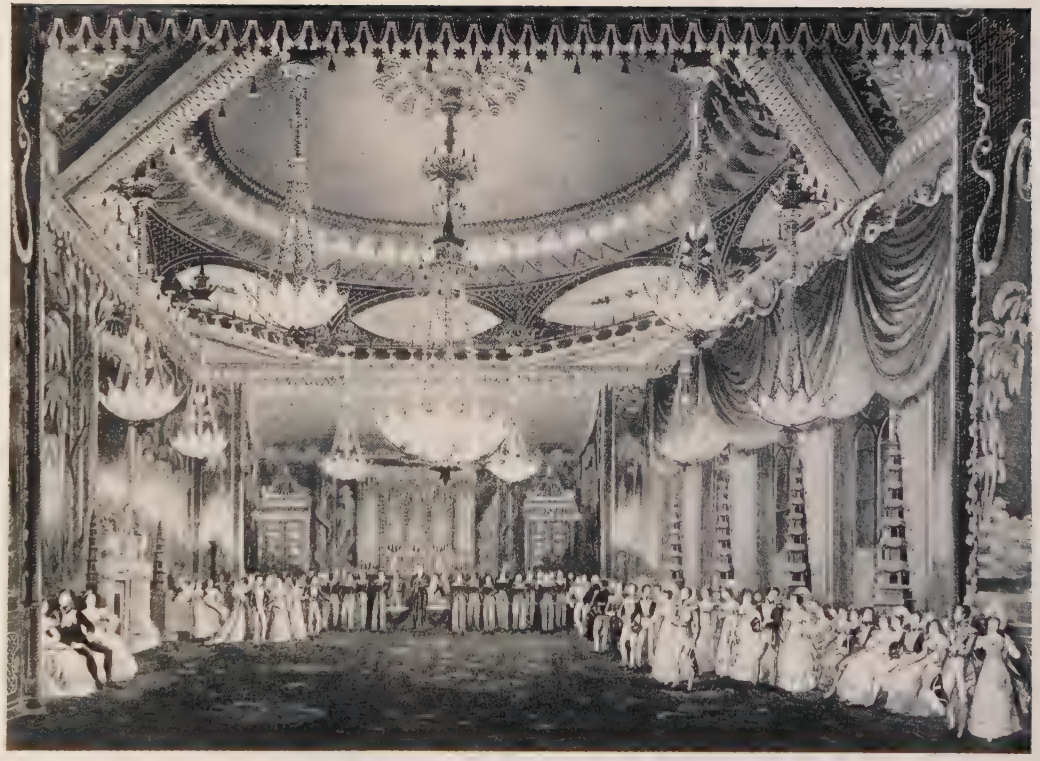
[1] See *ante*, p. 251.

[2] The King's private band numbered seventy performers, and as each member, in addition to his salary, was given (on the nights they performed) an excellent supper with a pint of wine, the expenditure involved was a considerable item even in the lavish budget of George IV.



THE MUSIC ROOM OF THE ROYAL PAVILION, BRIGHTON, AS DESCRIBED BY KELLY ON THE EVENING OF 1ST JANUARY, 1822

From the picture by John Nash

upon him to admit her behind the organ, with a strict injunction not to let herself be seen ; but female curiosity, even in one so young, prevailed, and after the first act of the concert, when the performers retired to take some refreshment, Signora Julia crept from her hiding-place behind the organ, and seated herself between the kettle-drums. The King was sitting on a sofa, between the Princess Esterházy and the Countess Lieven, and though the orchestra was at a distance, His Majesty's quick eye in a moment caught a glimpse of the little intruder. 'Who is that beautiful little child ? ' said the King ; 'Who brought her here ? ' And he immediately walked to poor Julia, and asked her who she was. 'I belong to *K*,' said Julia. 'And who the deuce is *K* ? ' said His Majesty.

" I was seated quite at the farther end of the room, conversing with Sir William Keppel, and the moment I saw what was going on, I requested Sir William to go to the King, and say that the child belonged to me, which he with great good nature did. His Majesty kissed little Julia ; and taking her into his arms, threw her over his shoulder, and carried her across the room to me, and placed her in a chair by my side, saying with the greatest condescension, 'Why did you leave the child in the cold ? Why not bring her into the room ? If she be fond of music, bring her here whenever you like.' This act of kindness, consideration, and goodness, was duly appreciated by all who witnessed it, and by me will ever be remembered with the most respectful gratitude.[1] On the following evening, when I again had the honour of a command to the palace, His Majesty was pleased to inquire after my pretty little girl."

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[1] Prince Hoare, the author of *No Song, No Supper*, who was at Brighton at the time, commemorated this incident with the following lines :

" ON JULIA, PEEPING

" In the music-room of the Pavilion, at Brighton, on the 1st January, 1822, and discovered in the fact by His Most Gracious Majesty George the Fourth ; who with his never-failing kindness of heart, and condescension, seized the little culprit in his arms, kissed and caressed her, and bore her in triumph, before the brilliant assembly, to her nearest and dearest friend, Michael Kelly, then present.

Behind the lofty organ's screen,
One gala eve, sly Julia lay,
Intent to peep, at whiles, unseen,
And all the glorious pomp survey.
Oh, little didst thou dream that eye
Which wakes to guard Britannia's crown,
Would there thy tiny form espy
And give thee, Julia, to renown."

Kelly, of course, owing to his gout, was seated in the little wheeled green chair he was now, nearly always, obliged to use; and it is easy to picture his extreme gratification when the King so graciously seated himself by the invalid's side, and later brought to him, on the royal shoulder, the discovered Julia, while the eyes of all that brilliant assembly were upon them. We may be sure that poor crippled Kelly made the best simulacrum in his power of the courtly bow which in his youth, as the scented fop of the Imperial Theatre of Vienna, he had perfected with ineffable grace. And now the end is at hand. In eight years' time both he and the King will be dead; then the blazing royal lights of the Pavilion will dim for ever, and that building be in the future but a melancholy museum of the past; and the dazzling diamonds of Princess Esterházy and Madame de Lieven, the Stuart sapphires of Lady Conyngham—where are they and those great ladies now? The scintillation of their wonderful jewels and their wit is symbolical of the dying glories of an era. This was the last flicker of the splendours of Courts in the direct line from the romance and colour of the eighteenth century, the last of the Kings of Taste, of the Grand Manner, and of the *haute école*. Kelly had known no other conception of Courts and monarchy—happily for him he died before the dawn of the coming age of steam and machinery and the power of democracy[1]; therefore he may be forgiven for ending his *Reminiscences* with a final ecstasy of panegyric to his Sovereign, who, in verity, despite his faults, was a noble Patron of the Arts and a man of personality and parts:

"One superior solace, under my worst visitations, I have indeed possessed. With some, perhaps, an avowal of it may draw upon me an imputation of pride or vanity ; but, if I know myself, gratitude is paramount with me to either of these passions ; and all liberal spirits, I trust, will excuse the apparent boast. Let me therefore declare, without equivocation or disguise, that the chief and dearest comfort remaining to me in this life is the proud consciousness that I am honoured by the patronage of my beloved Monarch. Even from my earliest arrival in these realms, where George IV now reigns in peace and glory, it was my enviable fortune to be distinguished by the Royal Favour ; and the humble individual who, in 1787, was noticed by the Prince of Wales, is still remembered in 1825 by THE KING. For many seasons past, upon my annual night, I have been regularly honoured with a munificent donation from my Sovereign ; but valuable to me as is that bounty in itself, the gift has scarcely been so gratifying to the feelings of his dutiful servant as the manner of presenting it.

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[1] Amusing evidence of the horror with which Kelly's contemporaries regarded democracy is furnished by an allusion in the *Memoirs* of Mrs. Crouch to the production of Thomas Holcroft's play, *Love's Frailties, or Precept against Practice*: "Although this comedy possessed merit worthy the pen of Mr. Holcroft, yet, at a time when the English took alarm at every word which they imagined tended to encourage the spirit of democracy, an expression which at another period would have pleased, incurred their disapprobation, namely, that a gentleman was a less useful and frequently a less worthy member of society than an artist: the audience loudly expressed their disgust, and this comedy was not so successful as the former dramatic works of Mr. Holcroft." See also *The Memoirs of Thomas Holcroft*.

A delicacy which anticipated wishes,
A generosity which exceeded hopes.

Were I to indulge my feelings, I should be diffuse upon this subject ; but I check myself, lest I should offend in a quarter where displeasure would afflict me most. I shall therefore merely venture to add, that whenever my malady casts me upon a bed of suffering, I do not forget that the most august hand in the Empire has condescended to place around it additional comforts ; and that no sooner does my relenting star restore me to society than my benefactor's name blesses the first glass I carry to my lips, and I say and sing, with heart and voice, devoutly and gratefully,

'GOD SAVE THE KING.'"

It is permissible to believe that the King, with his bounty, and Kelly, with his gratitude, had another and more intimate link which bound them together in memory of the lovely singer, Mrs. Crouch, long gone.

During the year 1825 Kelly was engaged in dictating his *Reminiscences* to Theodore Hook or in jotting down memoranda for the book, which was published in 1826 just in time for him to read it in print. This work he, of course inscribed, by his permission, to the King. The last year of Kelly's life was one of great suffering, a martyr to gout, a cripple no longer able to go out except in his little wheeled green chair ; but to the last he retained his cheerfulness, his hilarious conversation, for, as one who saw him near the end records, he was, as ever, " kind friend, delightful companion, liberal host." Or, as T. J. Dibdin expressed it, " the good-natured Michael Kelly closed a life which I verily believe was passed without his scarcely ever having felt a sentiment of ill-will towards an individual of his species, or having experienced a token of dislike." Yet the most illuminating last glimpse is from the pen of a more censorious friend, Cyrus Redding.

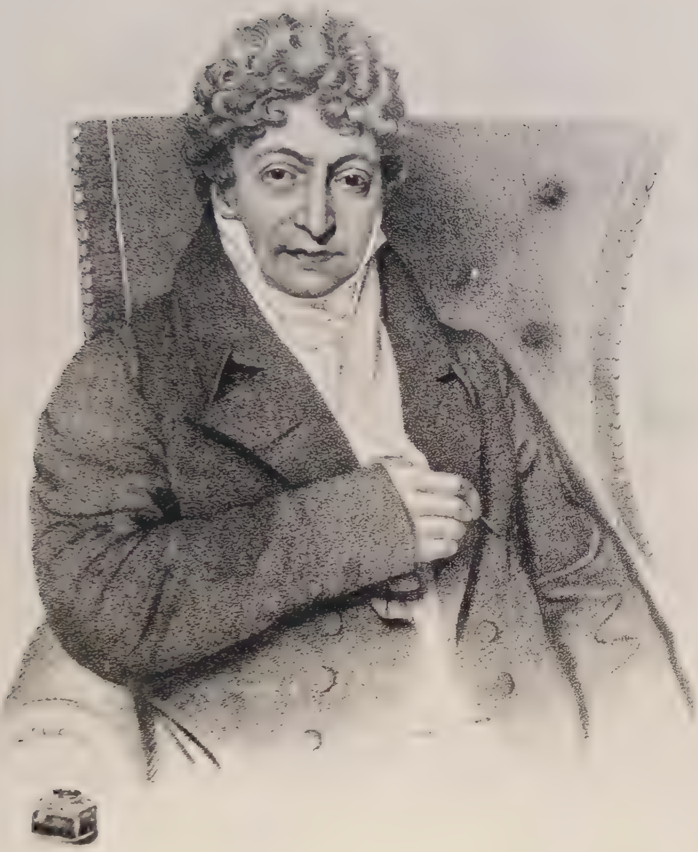
Kelly had gone to Brighton in the summer of 1826 for sea air and to inspect a large funereal urn he had ordered to be added to the tomb of Mrs. Crouch in the churchyard of St. Nicholas. One day, passing along the sea-front in his wheeled chair, he met Cyrus Redding, who had but a poor opinion of King George IV and his boon companions in the days of his Princedom of Wales and of his Regency, all of whom, he says, were also the friends of Kelly : " The veteran composer in appearance spoke of one tainted from such a connection during his life's prime. He looked flaccid from past indulgence. . . . A dissipated man."

Kelly said : " Here I am, nearly done for ; one hand useless with this cursed gout. Come over and have a chop with me. I have an old woman who looks after me now : once it might have been a young one."

" Who was the father of your gout, Kelly ?—The rummer that you can hardly now lift to your lips," replied the sermonising Cyrus.

Quick as thought, Kelly's Irish humour flashed back, " But I can lift the rummer still. I have only one hand that won't work. Come to me to-day—say you will."

Poor Kelly must have been lonely indeed so to have pressed to his board such a dismal and uncongenial guest, who observes that his host had preserved the old habit of swearing. Despite all these vices, however, Redding went to dinner, which comprised excellent fish and mutton-chops. Mike was gloomy, naturally, until he had swallowed some wine, and then he began



MICHAEL KELLY

At the age of sixty-two

From the portrait by A. Wivell

"to talk in his wild way, upsteaming with loyalty." "God bless the Prince!" he cried, speaking of his Sovereign by the old title he had borne so long. Shelley was his other hero. Then Kelly cursed Theodore Hook for omitting portions of his Reminiscences.[1] Cyrus Redding turned the conversation by saying he had been to the churchyard to see the new funereal urn over the grave of Mrs. Crouch.

"Ah!" said Kelly, with a regretful sigh—"ah! my dear friend; she was a sweet creature."

Soon after this meeting, Kelly went on to Margate, and there he died quite suddenly and alone on Monday, October 9th, 1826, at the age of sixty-four. How the shadows from the past must have thronged about him, how poignant his memories, in those last days of solitude and pain in dreary seaside lodgings, with grey ocean for prospect and, perchance, an autumn gale shaking the window-panes and soughing in the chimney for threnody. Did he live over again his triumphs as a boy on the operatic stage of Dublin? Did he land again in sunny Italy, hear the violins and harpsichords of the olden opera houses as the curtain goes up, hear the laughter and song of the Venice of Casanova? Was he once again the beau and pet of the Imperial Theatre of Vienna—does he see the immortal Mozart, in crimson pelisse. conducting *Le Nozze di Figaro*? And all the happy years in London, Mrs. Crouch singing, Sheridan's wit around the convivial board? It is best to hope that he remembers none of these things.

. . . .

Kelly's body was taken back to London by water. A correspondent of *The Times* wrote from Margate on October 13th: "The death of poor Kelly was kept a profound secret here. On Wednesday morning I saw a long deal box put on board the *William Joliffe*, with the words, 'GLASS—PRAY KEEP THIS SIDE UPWARD,' on the direction. But it was not until I beheld the little green chair, in which THE REMINISCENT was wont to be wheeled about, that I suspected what were the contents of the box."

Strange indeed to think that macabre chest held all that was left of a human body which had experienced to the uttermost sensation all the joys and triumph and colour and movement of an exceptionally eventful life.

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[1] See *ante*, pp. 12 and 335–336.

From 6, Tavistock Row the funeral procession of Michael Kelly had but a few steps to traverse to his parish church of St. Paul's, Covent Garden, where, on October 17th, 1826, fittingly enough, his body was interred in the graveyard of "The Actors' Church." But, like that of many another eminent man buried here, his tombstone has entirely disappeared, and even the site of his grave is not identified, for this churchyard is now a combination of "garden," coal or rubbish dump, and passage-way from Bedford, Henrietta, and King Streets. All that is known of the situation is what J. H. Jesse wrote in 1847: "In one corner sleep Michael Kelly, Edwin, and Estcourt." And near to Estcourt's grave was that of Edward Kynaston, the celebrated boy actor of female parts in the theatres of the Restoration, who was so clever "that it has since been disputable, among the judicious, whether any woman that succeeded him so sensibly touched the audience as he," as Downe wrote in *Roscius Anglicanus*. Near, again, to Kynaston rested the dramatist, William Wycherley, whose creations he so ably interpreted. Here were buried Sir Peter Lely; Samuel Butler, the author of immortal *Hudibras*; Robert Carr, Earl of Somerset; Mrs. Centlivre; "Peter Pindar"; Mrs. Davenport; John Taylor, the Water Poet; Thomas Girtin, the water-colour painter; Grinling Gibbons; Charles Macklin; William Linley; Dr. Arne. Yet only memorials to the three last named exist in the church wherein or around lies the dust of this so famous company.[1]

As the epitaph of Michael Kelly is now lost and unknown, one can but quote the inscription which his friend, T. J. Dibdin, could have supplied—lines which would undoubtedly have pleased poor Michael far more than the formal phrases of the lapidary :

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[1] As J. H. Jesse observed over eighty years ago, St. Paul's Church "contains the remains of more men of genius and celebrity than any other church in London. We search in vain, however, for any memorials to the illustrious dead. Genius (in England) has little to expect in its life-time, and has still less hope of being honoured with a tribute after death." The original church of St. Paul's, designed by Inigo Jones, was totally destroyed by fire in 1795. It was rebuilt on the same plan, including the famous east portico. The graves and tombstones in the churchyard were levelled in 1865. A few flat stones can be seen on the north side of the church, but the inscriptions are almost indecipherable.

Here lies (and you seldom have met with his like
For simple sincerity) good-natured Mike :
His rich native humour, his purse, heart, and table,
With genuine welcome, he gave you while able :
No sycophant he, as true candour must vouch ;
Though without any disinclination to Crouch.
To those who were 'pleased to be pleased,' few could bring
More talent for rational mirth ; let him sing,
Say, mimic, or blunder, he kept up the ball ;
Was severe upon none, unaffected to all :
He pleased, by a manner completely his own,
The theatre, festival, cottage, or Throne :
Placed high on a sixpenny seat, none so low,
But cried, 'Bravo ! Mike Kelly !' or, next, would you go
To see Michael where rank with philanthropy reigned,
You'd find to invite him his King not disdained.
Though Puritan zeal Mike's profession should curse,
Such self-esteemed betters than him may prove worse :
For tranquil, nay, cheerful, to death he resigned him,
When he left many saints and more sinners behind him.[1]

There we leave him, somewhere in that same churchyard across which, in a long bygone year, he had seen his friend, Sheridan, laughingly escape from the dun putting a horse to trial,[2] little recking then of the day when he would lie silent here and his friend in the cold splendours of the Abbey : "they are not long, the days of wine and roses."

The play is done, the green curtain is down, the lights are all out.

---

[1] Probably Lockhart read these lines in Dibdin's *Reminiscences* and based on them his own mock epitaph, in similar style and metre, to the memory of another bright Irishman :

Here, early to bed, lies kind William Maginn,
Who with genius, wit, learning, life's trophies to win—
. . . .
Barring drink and the girls, I ne'er heard of a sin ;
Many worse, better few, than bright, broken Maginn.

[2] p. 285.

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